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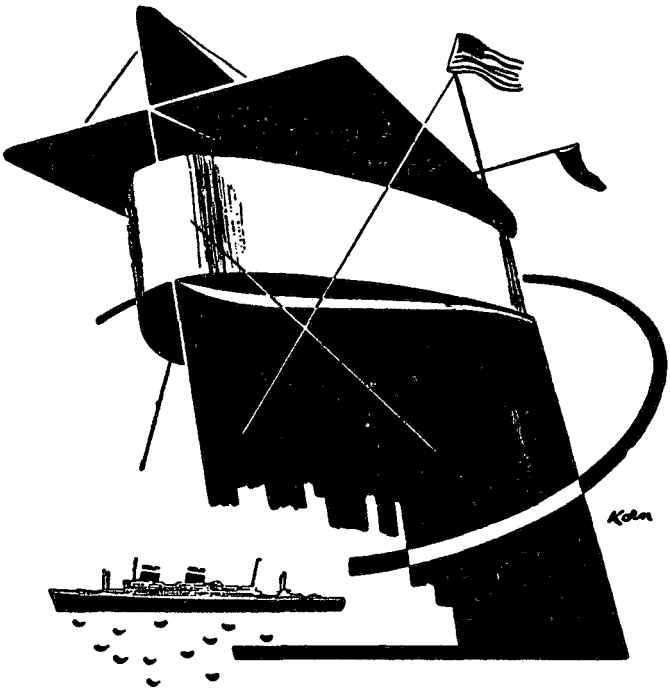

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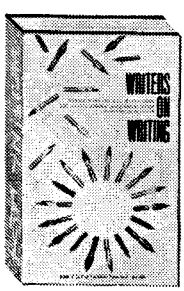

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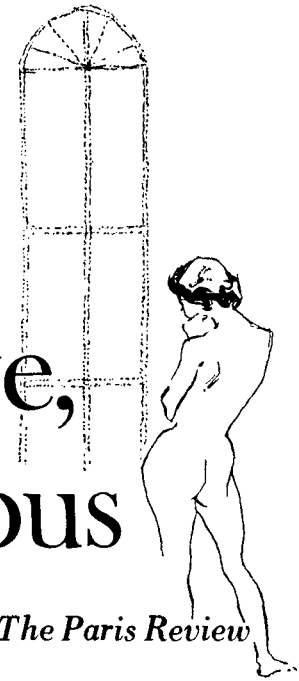

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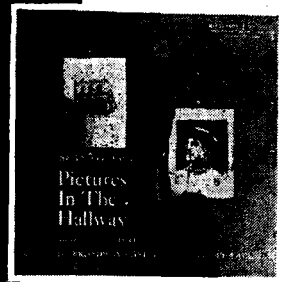

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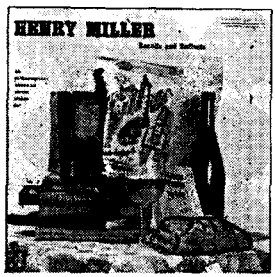

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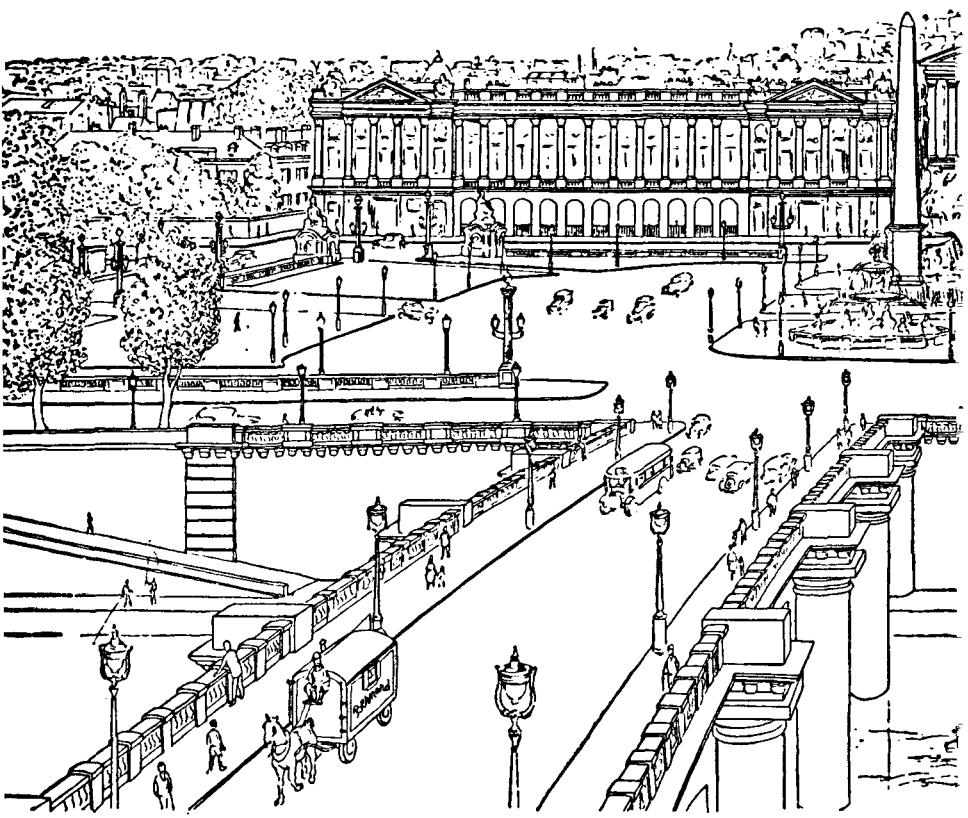

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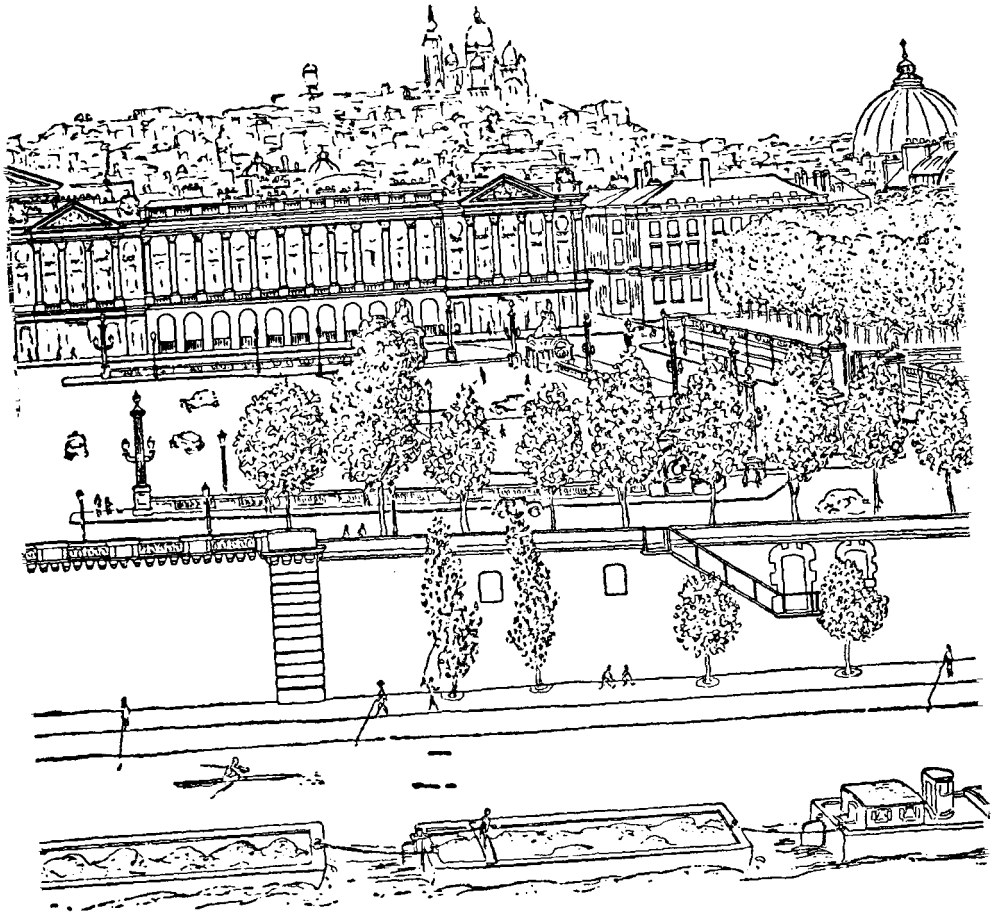

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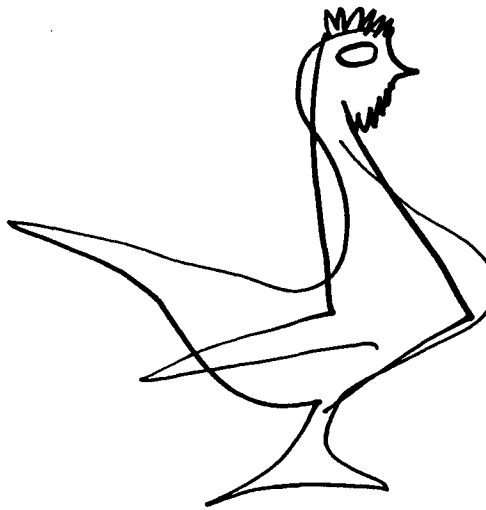

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From Cain's Book

I

I am sitting near Perth Amboy, N.J. on the port quarter of the scow whose starboard side is swinging just free of one of the Colonial docks. The water is dung-coloured and slides away smoothly, horizontally before the eye. A tanker. Low brown and green countryside, low bridges. Concrete piles. Elevated roads with automobiles like little bugs running across them. Squat and strutted things, trucks, gastanks, telegraph poles, scows, gravel, endless concrete, low, flat, dispersed, representing man's functional rape of unenviable countryside, marginal, flat and bogland. As the afternoon wears on the sky is becoming thin and milkywhite and the water is gleaming in reflection. I feel constricted. To walk beyond it would take how long, one pillbox after another through a skeleton factory, mile after mile flat and deserted? The nearest bar, I was informed by the last dockhand before they knocked off, is just over a mile away beyond that underpass—that the first evidence that man is not only a working animal; but it is really not much more than a filling station between here and the next one a mile further on, and so on. It reminds me of Hull or Sheerness, places like that on the east coast of England. The nearest bar a mile away. I've been down for some time now and there's no more heroin. I have smoked a joint. It has had the effect so far of increasing my depression.

What a Godforsaken spot, and to be hung up here for three days with less than six dollars! They told me that too before they knocked off, that they wouldn't be unloading me until the day after tomorrow. What the hell am I doing here?

—Drawings by Reginald Pollack

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The two letters depress me, my father's and Maisie's as well; loose ends in the texture of my systematic fantasy. Out of my memories I reconstruct the universe, out of my forgettings the nemesis that from time to time shakes the construction...

When I let myself into his room my father was sitting in front of a one-bar electric fire. His hands were thrust forward in front of him, the fingers tilted upwards to catch the glow on his soft white palms. He was looking at the wedding ring of his dead wife which he always wore on the third finger of his left hand. He was pleased to see me. It was the first time since the New Year. He shook hands ceremoniously, holding mine within both of his, and then he lit the gas and put on the kettle. He said we would have a cup of tea. It was cold outside and he hadn't been out during the day. We were in for a long winter by the looks of things. He asked me if I was hungry. He had some tins, one of sardines, one of peas, and one of pilchards or herrings in tomato sauce—he didn't know which. I said I wasn't but that I would take a cup of tea. He nodded vaguely. "Damn gas," he said, "there's no pressure." He fiddled around with the rubber tube which was attached to the gas ring and then, still with his back towards me, he said: "Doing anything yet, son?" And I said: "Not yet."

He leaned down and removed a piece of white fluff from the carpet. For a moment he seemed to be at a loss where to put it. He laid it at last in an ashtray on the mantlepiece. His hand brushed the pale green alarm clock which stood there and came to rest on his fountain pen, which he carried in his right-hand vest pocket, fingering it. He wasn't wearing his jacket.

When the kettle began to sing he came back again, lifting the lid and peering inside. Steam rose up about his hand. He replaced the lid, walked away again, and wiped his hands on one of his very clean white towels. His towels are always immaculate, especially the one he wears round his neck as he shaves. He arranged it neatly on the towel rail when he had

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finished. He said it was difficult these days. The postwar boom was over.

My father had been unemployed for twenty-five years.

He stood well back from the teapot, his left hand pressed against his paunch as he poured the water in with his right hand. He was forced to lean down over the teapot to see if it was full. He poured the tea and handed me my cup. As he did so, he looked hurt for some reason or other, but he wasn't looking directly at me. "How's Maisie?" he said. "She back at work?"

I nodded. I asked him if he had seen Viola lately.

"Your cousin?"

He hadn't seen her but he had heard of her through Tina. Viola's husband was ill again evidently, one lung collapsed. He had given her a hard time; she had gone again to the minister as she would have gone to the priest. The minister talked to him, man to man.

"Still," my father said, "he gets a good pension. Your aunt's just the same as ever."

"I thought of going to see Viola," I said.

He nodded. "She'd appreciate it. She's had a hard time."

He looked at my empty cup and poured me another one, milk, sugar, tea, in that order. Then he sat, rubbed his stockinged feet, and put on his outdoor shoes. He supposed I'd be going in a few minutes. If I cared to wait while he put on a collar and tie he would have a drink with me before I caught the tram. He said again he hadn't been out during the day. It would do him good, he felt.

The beer was cold and almost flat. He introduced me to the barman. "Just down from the university," he said. Since I looked vaguely like a tramp both the barman and myself were a little taken aback, but upon my father's face there was a kind of waxen innocence, and no sign at all he was aware he was being inexact.

"What are you going to do now?" the barman said after a pause. He directed his question at me.

It was my father who answered.

"He's training to be a journalist," he said with a small,

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birdlike smile. He laid his finger at the deep hollow in his temple. There was a macabre irrelevance in all he said. But I was glad enough not to have to say anything. The barman nodded his head, saying that the old days were over, tentatively, and my father, his Adam's apple wobbling, tilted his head back to drain the beer from his glass.

"Have another?"

"If you're having one," he said.

"Two more," I said to the barman.

When they were placed before us I asked my father if he wouldn't care to sit down. When we were in the company of a third person, whether it was a relative or a stranger, my father had a trick of addressing himself to him and discussing me as though I weren't present. In that way, adroitly placing me in some sense beyond them both, he was able at once to be proud of me and to cut the listener down to his own size; then when my preeminence was established, his little potato of a mouth split to show a cheap crescent of false teeth, and he asked after the other's offspring as though it were an old story to which he condescended to listen out of sympathy for the other. From the point of view of the listener it was a disturbing game. If he was unskillful enough to attempt to hit back, recounting the successes of his own offspring, my father had only to glance at the clock, whistle soundlessly through his thin lips, smile tolerantly to give the impression that he would have been interested if only the subject had been more important, and say: "I don't want to keep you late for that appointment, Joseph." Then, with a small bow to the other, he would usher me away, solicitous of my non-existent affairs. At this point, before we had gone two steps, he would play his ace. He turned round and said brightly to the other: "I'm sorry I've got to rush him away like this, but you'll probably have the opportunity of seeing him again before he leaves town. He's going to be here for a couple of weeks at least..." The other if he wasn't mortally offended, smiled weakly and nodded his head, for we were both looking at him, my father with an air of royal commiseration and I, forcedly, with one of polite and distant recognition. When we

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were alone again my father would be humming to himself, usually some light operatic air. After a pause he would ask me where I was going. If I was not doing anything in particular we could have a game of billiards.

I carried my beer over to one of the empty tables and he was forced to follow me with his own. I remember thinking that I shouldn't grudge the old man his victories, nor even his using me as a foil. They were more necessary to him than his bread.

He knew that he had displeased me and he laughed nervously when he sat down. "Good chap that," he said most treacherously of the barman.

"Tell me, dad, what does it feel like not to have worked for twenty-five years?"

"What? Pah... ha ha! that's not so! You're a joker, you are! Hem. ...It's true I've been out of a regular job since the depression. Now, before that, son, as your brothers will tell you, you went off every year for two months' holiday, and all three of you were dressed in white... not like your cousins ...with bonnets to match. Your mother wouldn't have you in anything but white, and neither would I. Always out of a bandbox, you children."

"But in a way it's an achievement, Dad."

"What? what's that? What's an achievement, son?"

"Not working all that time."

"Pah, it's not true! I looked after the house! Who do you think looked after the house? The house couldn't have been run without me. Your mother was always too soft. Good thing she had me!"

The reverse was true. He always made things twice as difficult for my mother by generally getting in the way, scaring the lodgers with his ugly temper, by bursting constantly into the kitchen like an angry bear and striking my mother, or in one way or another reducing her to tears, and by his habitual practice of seizing the bathroom and barricading it against all comers.

A bathroom-toilet is a vital place in a boarding-house. If one person monopolizes it, a queer kind of consternation

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overtakes the household. My father regarded the bathroom as his own.

He cleaned it and polished it and made every surface gleam. He arranged the coarse runner-carpet lovingly as though it were fine rare Persian. He waxed the oilcloth and applied Brasso to the two inefficient carpet rods which more or less kept the long strip of carpeting from gliding into folds across the oilcloth when you walked on it. He kept the windows spotless and changed the cream curtains twice a week. (At the same time he grumbled if one of the lodgers wanted his curtains changed more than once a fortnight).

He had four different locks on the bathroom door: a key, a snib, a snick, and a hook-and-eye. He used all four when he was in there himself, I suppose in all about eight to twelve hours a day. The kitchen was the family living room, and my father and mother slept there in a retractable bed. All the other rooms except "the boys' bedroom" had been converted for the use of lodgers, so he had no other room of his own in his own house. The major cleaning took three hours every morning. It began as soon as the lodgers (by preference "professional men") went to work and the children had gone to school.

An old couple who came eventually to stay was the bane of my father's existence. The old man was crippled and had to be helped to the bathroom by his wife and my mother. Together they supported him across the hall and down the passage which led to the bathroom. On a good day their passage from the room to my father's lair took about three minutes each way. At the weekend the children often timed it and placed bets. A good passage was usually assured if my father was in a tolerable humour. Then he would stand with a peculiar, fawning smirk of distaste in the open kitchen doorway as the faltering procession passed, the old man wobbling on two sticks between the women. On a bad day the passage sometimes took as long as six minutes and once clocked on a stopwatch at 6 m. 48 secs. This occurred almost exclusively because my father was in a foul temper. The old couple visited the bathroom twice a day, once in mid-morning between 10:30 and 11, and in the evening between 7:30 and 8.

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As the morning visit forced my father to interrupt his cleaning it was usually the more perilous. He would stamp and rage in the kitchen, shouting: "Always the bloody same! Got to clean the bloody place twice! Leave towels all over the bloody place!"

On such days the frail group quivered perceptibly as it neared the kitchen door. Then, when they had come and gone, my father would move with a cry of triumph like a beast to his lair. On bad days he was still cleaning the bathroom when those of us who came home for lunch returned. And then my mother would go nervous and angry to the door and knock on it: "Alf! Would you please finish up in there! Mr. Rusk wants to use the bathroom before he eats lunch!"

A cry of pained protest from my father. "Bloody people keeping me back! Can't get my bloody work done! Messing up the bloody toilet seat with powder!"

Sometimes he came out almost immediately and sometimes he lingered so long that my mother, with children and lodgers all clamoring to use the bathroom, had to go tearfully again to the door.

Every moment someone else was in the bathroom was an agony for my father. Even when he was eating (and he ate quickly, like a wolf) he kept one ear cocked for sounds from the bathroom next door.

"What the bloody hell was that! What's he doing in there anyway? I thought he was going to eat his bloody lunch! When are you going to get a chance to eat yours, eh?"

"I've already eaten. Now eat your lunch and forget about Mr. Rusk." She was not convinced by his concern for her eating. She knew that as soon as the lodgers and the children had gone out again he would return to the bathroom and

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lock himself in until around five, professedly performing his own ablutions.

In the evening my father was in and out between baths, cursing the last visitor who had disarranged towels, who, if he were a child, had drawn "bloody silly faces" on the steam-clouded mirror. "Annie, will you come and see this pigsty!"

So when my father said with throaty conviction that the house couldn't have been run without him, I grinned.

"I'm telling you the God's honest truth, son. Your poor mother was too soft. Everybody said that."

I laughed. "She was certainly too soft with you, Dad. Now why don't you just admit it? You haven't worked for a quarter of a century. Now I'm not working either, so I'm following in your footsteps. You ought to be proud of me. When we meet one of your friends you should say: "This is Joe, my youngest son. He's unemployed. Of course he's not quite up to his Dad's standard yet because he's not unemployable, but I have great hopes for him because he's had a much better education than I ever got."

That amused him. "You're a devil, son!" He wagged his head. He became more serious. "But you'll have to make up your mind to do something soon."

"You didn't. That's the only difference... I knocked off a little earlier than you did. Strictly speaking, I never began. The trouble with you, Dad, is that you've always been ashamed of being unemployed and so you never learned to enjoy your leisure. For God's sake, even when we were starving you wouldn't even collect the dole!"

"Queue up with that bloody tribe!"

"The proletariat?"

He smiled his little potato smile, distant, the better not to focus.

I went on. "You always pretended to be cleaning that bathroom of yours. That's what made you the bad-tempered rascal you were!"

"I kept that bathroom spotless," he said rather gloomily.

"You want me to engrave that on your tombstone?"

"Don't talk like that, son."

"I'm not ashamed of you, Dad."

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"I know... I know..." He had begun to whistle soundlessly in the abstracted way he had. He drank another beer and then he said he was tired.

"You won't come into town with me then?"

"No, I think I'll go to bed early tonight, son. I think I have a cold coming on."

I shook hands with him at the corner of the block where he lived. As he walked away I thought that his room was always neat, the gas ring cleaned with Vim and steel wool. And "electric fires are not dirty..." He eats one thin slice of bread with a cup of tea before retiring.

II

I had that familiar feeling of regarding my whole life as leading up to that present moment before which I halted as before a kind of cosmic interrogation mark. At that moment I was at the mercy of whatever distraction, voices outside, the sound of footsteps, a hooting tug, the sense of my own shadow there in the cabin. It didn't seem to matter. Whatever increase of entropy in the external world, my response was relevant. The universe might shrink or expand. I would remain aware, a little pocket of coherence in the city of dreadful night. Or would I? The drug can be treacherous, leading through all the hollow recesses and caves of panic. An identity slips away and one can no longer choose to be immersed in it, voluptuously to be duped. I remember I was forced to lie down and close my eyes.

I was unable to return directly to my thoughts, whatever they were, and my former identity paled and disintegrated like the reflection of a receding face on the broken surface of water. If I had looked in a mirror and seen no reflection there I feel I wouldn't have been unduly startled. The invisible man... For an indefinite time I existed as passively as a log, and on a correlative level of experience, as moving sap lives, darkly, in the veins of wood, and then, gradually or suddenly,

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later, I was involved in a spiritual excitement provoked by some object, still anonymous, out of the external world, and that naked excitement was both the occasion and the means of my denominating it XYZ to which I was forthwith committed. Thus an identity becomes and his new created world.

Kafka said: "My doubts stand in a circle round every word, I see them before I see the word, but what then! I don't see the word at all, I invent it."

...Alone on the scows for long periods of time I sometimes find myself searching for topics to think about, or round, for although I enjoy the certainty of many discoveries, when my thought is like an engraving of tablets, there are moments... and the present moment is always suspect... when it is entirely frivolous, when, in barely connected sentences and unresolved paragraphs, I shit idiocy and wisdom, turd by turd, thinking impressionisticly, aware of no valid final order to impose. Whatever I write is written deep into my own ignorance. And I find myself cultivating a certain crudity of expression, judging it to be essential to meaning, in a slick age vital to the efficacy of language.

It was still morning. At least I supposed so. It occurred to me that I was alone. And then it occurred to me how often that thought occurred to me. Sometimes it was as though I could only come to exist by writing it down on paper: — *I am sitting alone.* It had occurred to me that I was mad. To stare inwards. To be a hermit, even in company. To wish for the thousandth-making time for the strength to be alone and play. Immediately there was a flower on my brow, Cain's flower. To mean everything and for everything to be a confidence trick, tasting power coming into being for others; I had often thought that only through play could one taste that power safely, if dangerously, and that when the spirit of play died there was only murder. One could be in another's world anyway only indirectly, communicate only indirectly; one had recourse to a kind of expression appropriate to that ambiguity, was masked always, even at the moment of discarding the mask, because for another the act of exposure stood equally in need of interpretation...

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As I lay there it occurred to me that my thoughts were becoming incoherent, which wasn't unusual. Sustained for a phrase or two, they splintered, and I imagined my mind as a kind of faulty lavatory system. It flushed unexpectedly and took some time to fill up. And one fill was pretty much identical to the next.

I began to think about Tom.

I stayed at his place last night. I bumped into him by chance on 14th Street. I was broke and I went there to have a cheap drink. Tom decided to go without money to try to cop and I went to wait for him at his place.

The dog. I had just reached out to lay a flimsy piece of wood on the brick hearth when I heard the dog growl. I'm used to him now. There's a hostile truce between us. At the beginning I tried to make friends with him. But like Fay and Geo and all the others I failed. "All right, mutt, have it your own way." An armed truce.

I looked at him. His red woolly head, the small ears set close like knuckles at the round skull, was tilted slightly to one side and in his gleaming white fangs he gripped an old bone. (The dog's sex is uninteresting; he, she, it—it's a bitch in fact, but, what the hell?) He shook it at me. A sharp animal look. Alert, like whatever I did he was ready to act without—I knew damn well—sufficient forethought. He might bite off my finger for example or rake the back of my hand with his teeth.

"Tom," I said one time, "That's a damn stupid dog you've got there. I tell you, if he bites me I'll break his skull."

"She's not so easy to kill," Tom said, reaching protectively towards the dog. "Come here, girl. Come here."

"He's a dog."

"Sure he's a dog. What's wrong with that?"

"If you kick me I'll ask for an explanation," I said. "If your dog bites me I won't accept one, I'll kill the dog."

At such times Tom becomes sullen.

"GO AWAY!" I said to the dog.

A growl came from somewhere near his palpitating underside.—Why, I thought, do I have to put up with this? The

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dog was just part of it, the last straw; when Tom relaxed and stopped bugging you... only on horse... the dog came in as an understudy.

In the junkie world there are many such last straws. One finds oneself of necessity giving the other man more latitude. There is no one whom Fay hasn't burned. But she continues to see everyone from time to time, when a man is desperate. Junkies in New York are often desperate. To be a junkie is to live in a madhouse. Laws, police forces, armies, mobs of indignant citizenry crying mad dog. We are perhaps the weakest minority that ever existed; forced into poverty, filth, squalor, without even the protection of a legitimate ghetto. There was never a wandering Jew who wandered farther than a junkie, without hope. Always certain where the junk is, never sure that where the junk is is not the anteroom to the penitentiary. A Jew can stand up and say: "Yes, I am a Jew and these are my persecutors." There is always a possibility of effective resistance because there were always some Gentiles who were not profoundly shocked when a Jew said: "It is not necessarily bad to be a Jew." Such tardy hope as is held out to junkies is that one day they will be regarded not as criminals but as "sick". When the A. M. A. wins, the peonage will be less harsh, but the junkie, like the peon, will still have to buy at the commissary.

Thus there is a confederacy amongst users, loose, hysterical, traitorous, unstable, a tolerance that comes from the knowledge that it is very possible to arrive at the point where it is necessary to lie and cheat and steal, even from the friend who gave one one's last fix.

Tom loves his dog. He wrestles with it. It is for him the only being who doesn't present a threat. If it ever turns on him he can always kill it. It was the dog that decided me at one time that I couldn't live with him. It is an angry extension of himself, a weapon.

Except when we are under heroin our relationship is tense and unpredictable. It is only when I have fixed that I can forgive Tom everything, even the painful slowness, the hothouse movements of his fixing before me. Tom always fixes

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before me. He doesn't insist upon this. He simply observes a common ritual which I have always refused to observe.

Sometimes we make swift covert journeys at night through the backstreets of Harlem to cop. Tom has good contacts in Harlem and he likes to take me along. If you are a member of any underground in a hostile city it's good for one's morale. In the moonlight as we descend the dark stairs which lead downwards through a certain park I wait for him to say: "I go first."

I know that he will give me several moments in which to stake the prior claims and I doubt whether he's ever been convinced that I won't do so, even though I've said to him again and again that I don't give a damn who goes first once we're safely locked up in whatever pad and told him he gave me a pain in the ass when he carried on like that. I've waited for a long time for Tom to say: "You go first, Joe," but he never has and I doubt if he ever will. I have asked him why the ritual is so important to him. His answer is the usual one. "You never know when the Man will bust in. If they come, I want to have the shit in me." But that's not good enough. It's not always necessary to be a mouse, even if you're a junkie in New York. What he's really doing is to affirm that finally (shit-absolute) he doesn't give a fuck for me, which I accept, because "I don't give a fuck for him," but as long as that goes without saying all the muscle-flexing is redundant. This kind of promiscuous creation of tension in a situation which is God knows far too intense already burns me up.

Unless I am in physical pain it is immaterial to me who goes first. Tom pretends it isn't that way for him. He's lying. The urgency doesn't exist. To pretend that it does is to prostrate oneself hysterically before a malicious fiction. It is quite unlike the hysteria experienced by all of us in the day to day danger of our situation... (Coming down the stairs at two o'clock in the morning on to the deserted subway platform at 125th Street, followed it seems by two men disguised as ectoplasm... if they come within ten yards get rid of it... meanwhile don't panic...) At best it is a submission to the very ignorance that has led to the branding of the junkie as a

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social menace. At worst it's much worse.—Tom turns on. He is being generous and takes on a patronizing air. That's a danger signal. He is cleaning the needle for you with a stupefied thoroughness that makes you sweat with impatience. He leaves the dropper tinged pink and before you can object he has thrust it with all manner of possible impurities into the precious liquid you have prepared in the spoon. Again the drawn-out stupefication as he syphons up the liquid, pressing the nozzle of the dropper against the cotton to extract the last drop. The minutes have ticked away.

If you have contained yourself, you say: "Gimme it now, man, now..."

Tom surveys you as a father his ingrate son.

"Look, mother," you say, "gimme that here now!"

"Whatsa matta wid you? I'm trying to help you. I'm makin it easy for you!"

"It's easy, now give me that fucking spike!"

You have to cut Tom off. Otherwise, he will analyse the nature of gratitude and delay your fix indefinitely.

And it has been occurring to you since the beginning that you anyway dig performing the whole operation yourself, and have felt that way about it since you had your first main-line years ago, fixing yourself, in your own time, in your own way, without advice, far less his kind of interference, and that he has already, so to speak, scoffed you hors d'oeuvres.

"Gimme that spike quick or I'll slit your fucking throat!"

Consider that it took two hours to score, waiting, unknowing, or travelling backwards and forwards on subways, that you came secretly along streets, silently through doors, with all the tensions of a law-breaker with no wish to find yourself suddenly behind bars, and here this motherfucker, indulging some kind of sadistic whim, has already delayed your turning on five minutes, perhaps ten, mixed some of his own damn blood (not your type) in your fix, is still sitting there, stupefied, and all your precious fix is still at the mercy of his finger and thumb as he grows more careless, as he grows more indignant at your ingratitude.

I watched him do this to Jody for a quarter of an hour once,

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while she was screaming with impotent exasperation, and I said to him: "You burn her ass any more, Tom, and she'll put a knife in you."

"What're you settin *me* up for? What've I done? I'm only trying to help!"

"*Give her the fucking spike. It's her fix you damn bland bastard!*"

"Dog," I said, "you're a mad dog. I know how you play. If I take that bone away from you you'll get real mad and bite. Who taught you to bite, dog? You know what happens in this world to dogs that bite?"

I don't know what it was that first attracted me to Tom unless it was that I felt him to be attracted to me. We just met, scored, and passed a few days together turning on. Most of my friends, especially those who don't use heroin, disliked him from the beginning, and I have often found myself rushing emotionally and intellectually to his defense. At times after we had fixed and blown some pot, with a sleek thrust of my own soul, a thrust of empathy, I used to find myself identifying with him. I seldom do it now because Tom bores me nowadays, but I did so, often. But gradually I came to realize that he didn't think like I did, that he took my rationalizations too seriously or not seriously enough.

For example, he still talks about kicking, and at the same time he denies that he is hooked, and yet he has agreed with me again and again that if you simply put heroin down you are avoiding the issue. It isn't the horse, for all the melodramatic talk about withdrawal symptoms. It is the pale rider.

When Tom says: "I'm gonna kick," I say: "Bullshit." He becomes hurt and sullen. He feels I am deserting him. And I suppose I am.

He says he kicked before, the time he went to Lexington.

"Sure, and when you got back here you went straight up to Harlem and copped. A man doesn't kick, Tom. When he thinks in terms of kicking he's hooked. There are degrees of addiction, and the physical part has nothing to do with it. The physical bit comes soon and I suppose that then technically you're hooked. But with the right drugs you can kick that in a few days. The degrees of addiction that matter are psycho-

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logical, like intellectually how long have you been a vegetable? Are you riding the horse or what? The trouble with you, Tom, is that you really put shit down. You use it most of the time, you dig it, but all the time you're putting it down, talking about kicking. It's not the shit that's got you hooked. You shelve the problem when you think in those terms. You talk all the time about copping and kicking. Talk about copping. Don't talk about kicking. Get high and relax. There are doctors, painters, lawyers on dope, and they can still function. The American people is on alcohol, and that's much more deadly. An alcoholic can't function. You've got to get up off your ass and stop believing their propaganda, Tom. It's too much when the junkies themselves believe it. They tell you it's the shit and most of the ignorant bastards believe it themselves. It's a nice tangible cause for juvenile delinquency. And it lets most people out because they're alcoholics. There's an available pool of wasted-looking victims to stand trial as the corrupters of their children. It provides the police with something to do, and as junkies and potheads are relatively easy to apprehend because they have to take so many chances to get hold of their drugs, a heroic police can make spectacular arrests, lawyers can do a brisk business, judges can make speeches, the big pedlars can make a fortune, the tabloids can sell millions of copies. John Citizen can sit back feeling exonerated and watch evil get its deserts. That's the junk scene, man. Everyone gets something out of it except the junkie. If he's lucky he can creep round the corner and get a fix. But it wasn't the junk that made him creep. You've got to sing that from the rooftops!"

I have talked to him for hours. But in the end he always comes back to saying he's going to kick. That's because he hasn't really got much choice. He has no money. To get money he has to kick and there's a fat chance of his kicking without money. Still, it bugs me when he goes on talking about kicking.

"I'm gonna kick."

"Man, you'll never kick." Sometimes I don't even say it.

"You bastard, I will."

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"O.K. then, you'll kick."

"Sure I will. You think I can go on like this?"

"You did before."

"That's different. I was hung up then. I'll get the place fixed up good. You help me, Joe. If we only had some bread."

"How much rent do you owe?"

"Not much, a few months."

"How many months?"

"Must be about eight."

"You've been goofing for eight months? You owe $320 back rent."

"I'm gonna see him and say I'll pay it off, twenty a week."

"Where are you going to get twenty a week?"

"I can get a job. I'll start kicking tomorrow. I can kick it in three days. I haven't got a real habit. I'll get dollies. I know a stud who knows where to get them cheap. I'll stay off shit. I won't touch the damn stuff."

"Don't talk like an alcoholic."

But it's like telling a man inflicted with infantile paralysis to run a hundred yards. Without the stuff Tom's face takes on a strained expression; as the effect of the last fix wears off all grace dies within him. He becomes a dead thing. For him, ordinary consciousness is like a slow desert at the centre of his being; his emptiness is suffocating. He tries to drink, to think of women, to remain interested, but his expression becomes shifty. The one vital coil in him is the bitter knowledge that he can choose to fix again. I have watched him. At the beginning he's over-confident. He laughs too much. But soon he falls silent and hovers restlessly at the edge of a conversation, as though he were waiting for the void of the drugless present to be miraculously filled. *(—What would you do all day if you didn't have to look for a fix?)* He is like a child dying of boredom, waiting for promised relief, until his expression becomes sullen. Then, when his face takes on a disdainful expression, I know he has decided to go and look for a fix.

"You going to split, Tom?"

"Yeah, you comin'?"

I have gone with him sometimes.

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"Look, you've still got some dollies, Tom."

"I finished them."

"Christ, already? O.K. I've got some goofballs and we can get a bottle of cough syrup. You can drink that."

"That stuff's no good."

"It'll cool you."

Two o'clock in the morning. Sitting in Jim Atkins' drinking coffee slowly. A few haggard men. A drunk woman trying to get someone to go home with her.

"I'm going home, Tom."

"Where?"

"Bank Street. I'm going to try and get some sleep."

"Look, let me come with you. If I stay around here I'll meet someone and get turned on."

"I thought that's what we were sitting here for?"

"No, Joe, it'll be O.K. tomorrow. It'll be three days."

"O.K. Come on then."

We get into the narrow bed and turn off the light. We lie awake for a while in the dark. I say: "Look, Tom, you'll be O.K."

"I think I can sleep."

I feel his arm move round me. I am suddenly very glad he is there.

I use to wonder if we would make love. Sometimes I felt we were on the brink of it. I think it occurred to both of us during those nights Tom slept with me in my single bed on Bank Street, his long brown arm round my body. There hasn't been much of what is ordinarily understood as sexuality in our relationship. The effect of heroin is to remove all physical urgency from the thought of sex. But on those nights we hadn't taken any heroin. We had drunk, turned on pot, taken whatever pills were available, and there were moments when our naked flesh touched and we were at the edge of some kind of release. If either of us had moved the other would probably have followed.

I can see Tom smiling as he comes in, his lips drawn back, showing his long teeth. He is wearing a chamois cap in the style of the English gentleman, a well-cut green pullover,

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drainpipe trousers, and a pair of oversized, beat-up ankle-boots. Over all he wears a brown leather coat of past days' motorists. When he turns on he stands and walks vaguely like an ape, bent at the knees, bent at the crotch, bent at the mid-riff, long arms dangling in front. Sometimes he carries an umbrella.

His first glance is at me, smiling across at me with his dark, beautiful eyes. And then, "Down boy! Down, I tell yah! Christ, yah bad bitch!" The dog, its legs rigid, is dragged by the collar across the wooden floor and forced outside the main part of the loft. Tom closes the door quickly behind it, turns to me and grins again.

"You wanna get straight?"

He unbuckles his leather coat, hangs it carefully on a hanger, his cap on a hook, and unwraps the beautifully designed pale green scarf from his shoulders.

When I come with the water he is already pouring the powder from the transparent envelope into the spoon.

"I go first," he says.

I don't answer. I am watching how he lifts the water from the tumbler into the eyedropper. I am wondering whether he is going to be quick or slow.

His nose is two inches above the spoon as he drops the water from the eyedropper on to the powder. He holds the spoon near his eyes as he applies matches to it. He sets the spoon back on the table, bubbling.

He is doing all right.

Syphoning up the liquid again, applying the needle with its collar (a strip from the end of a dollar bill) to the neck of the dropper, twisting it on, resting the shot momentarily at the edge of the table while he ties up with the leather belt on his right arm...but I am already beyond all that. I am not watching and he is not playing for a public... if he is I shan't notice because I am not watching... we are both of us, I believe, relating each and separately to the heroin before us. He is stroking the arm he is about to puncture just above a blackish vein and I am already moving to cook up my own fix in the spoon. By the time I have it prepared he is already

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loosening on the belt. And now he presses the bulb. It doesn't take long. It might have taken much longer. I love him again.

As I take my own fix I am looking at all the needle-marks. They follow the length of the vein down the arm. Since the Man looks for marks I am trying to keep them dispersed, to keep them as impermanent as possible. Some junkies use a woman's cosmetic to mask their marks; it is simpler to stick to one vein until it collapses. They do so and make up their arms, just where the elbow bends, like a woman makes up her face. Shooting in places where the vein is more submerged has over a period of time made quite a mess of my arm. As I fix I am aware of Tom, slightly to one side of me, standing, his left hand lying on the table for balance, smiling idyllically. I wash out the eyedropper and sit down on the bed. I begin to scratch.

An hour later Tom says: "Man, that's good shit," and he drapes himself at the other end of the bed. The dog barks in the next room.

"Don't let the bastard in," I say.

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TO
MY FATHER'S GHOST

Once more
The rain coerces memory,
And shadows cast upon the door
Love's old encroachment and the face
Of one whose history
Unwinds within this dark, abiding place.

Clocks whir.
The years' residual despair
Sifts downward, gathers to a blur
Of meaning, and the heart is dust.
Who am I? and I wear
Again love's degradation, as I must.

Old mole,
Oh dear, unsponsored ghost, lie still!
The mind, unravelled, would be whole.
I am my own, my own increase!
Yet from your savage hill
The dead still walk where definitions cease.

—PETER EVERWINE

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Two Poems by Catherine Davis

THE NEW YEAR'S BURDEN

I will not, though I would, resolve,
As the New Year's Eve comes on,
To do, not do, review, revolve
On the past year, how it has gone,
Taking not all, but still enough
(Seeing I had not much to lose)
Of what, for all my falling off,
Might have been mine, as then, to use:
  But if I cast off heaviness,
  This is my burden, none the less.

I would no more, as I have done,
Consider what the year will bring
But take the seasons one by one;
For, all in all, the heaviest thing
—Excepting only no more hope—
Is hope returning year on year:
Let me not give it now the scope
Of what I might do, for I fear
  That if it cast off heaviness,
  This is my burden, none the less.

I care no more for this *I might*,
Whether it comes as *would* or *should*:
The first is nothing if not light,
Yet it has weighed me down for good;
And how much heavier, come to nought,
As I have found, the other is:
Lightness that ponders what it ought
Weighs like its own antithesis:
  But when I cast off heaviness,
  This is my burden, none the less.

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I cannot, if I would, complain
Of a mean lot and curse my luck
(Though luck for luck, as gain for gain,
I cannot say that I've been struck
By how much mine exceeds) but hold
That this same luck has come to me
Never so empty-handed, cold,
As my more favored levity:
  And if it casts off heaviness,
  This is my burden, none the less.

Let others ponder, while they may,
Their wealth of possibilities;
But, as for me, since I must pay
For empty-headed-handed ease,
And since what comes will also go,
I find most hope in most distrust.
I make my burden lighter so
And bear the new year, as I must:
  But if I cast off heaviness,
  This is my burden, none the less.

Envoi to the Reader

I do not hope even to strike
Your fancy with my verse: No mask,
Symbol nor image nor the like
Encumbers it, as you might ask;
  I make too plain my heaviness:
  This is my burden, none the less.

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WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

After Thomas Wyatt

What does it mean? I lie awake;
My mind needs rest, my bones all ache:
So needy and so loath to take?
What does it mean?

When I should most be comforted,
Covers and pillow, limbs and head,
Are every which way in the bed.
What does it mean?

I toss, I turn, I cough, I curse;
I must, it seems, all night rehearse,
Revile my days and make them worse:
What does it mean?

I doze a little, dream, and start:
The random terrors of the heart
Wake me—they take my daemon's part:
What does it mean?

My daemon says they cheat, they lie,
Run from themselves, themselves awry,
Who say it's love that makes them cry
What does it mean?

How little they must need to know!
Nothing but love can rouse them so,
When a whole life is touch and go!
What does it mean?

Thus it is I spend the night,
Conscious that in my daemon's sight
The waking heart must see things right:
What does it mean?

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What does it matter that the past
And my own daemon hold me fast?
I shall get sleep enough at last:
    What does it mean?

—CATHERINE DAVIS

THORPE, NURMI, RUTH

Smooth muscles tic. Honeyed sunlight
spreads thickly on stadium grass.
Drinkers of grace shout throats dry,
voices hoarse for the quiet moment.

He, below on the stippled grass,
circles back slipping smooth leather
on his palms, dancing on the cinders.
Racing scything Time, he smiles.

The ball, an empty egg-shell, spirals
over long shadows in left field
searching for the wall. He turns
watching its fragile flight, gauging

its fall as if he, a fireman, were
coaxing some hysteric from burning sills.
The moment goes. He jogs up field,
eases to the bench, rides shoulders to showers.

—VERN RUTSALA

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was exploring his own mind also. The compositions in verse and in prose fiction ~~to which I have just referred~~ may I think be ignored, except for ~~the~~ such information as they can yield about their author; and his other writings, those concerned directly with theological, social or political matter, should be considered as by-products of a mind of which the primary activity was literary criticism.

I first met Middleton Murry by appointment at some meeting place whence he was to conduct me to his home for dinner and for a discussion of his projects for The Athenaeum, a defunct weekly which was to be revived under his editorship. I had heard of him earlier, in the circle of Lady Ottoline Morrell where I had already met Katherine Mansfield on one occasion, but we had held no communication before he wrote to propose this meeting. I do not know what he had been told about me; what is important is that he had read (having had it brought to his attention no doubt at Garsington) my first book of Verse, Prufrock, and that it was entirely because of the impression this little book had made upon him that he wished to ask me to become his Assistant Editor. ~~of The Athenaeum under him.~~ Of my critical writings he knew nothing: I gave him some copies of The Egoist to enable him to judge of my abilities. It speaks of the man, however, that he had made up his mind that he wanted my help in his editorial venture and without having seen any criticism of mine, ~~and~~ wholly on the strength of his opinion of Prufrock. After a good deal of hesitation I declined; and I think that I was wise to do so, and to remain for some years at my desk in the City. I did however become one of Murry's regular contributors, reviewing some book

—Facsimile of an Eliot manuscript

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—*D. Cammell*

THE ART OF POETRY I

T. S. ELIOT

The interview took place in New York, at the apartment of Mrs. Louis Henry Cohn, of House of Books, Ltd., who is a friend of Mr. and Mrs. Eliot. The bookcases of the attractive living room contain a remarkable collection of modern authors. On a wall near the entrance hangs a drawing of Mr. Eliot, done by his sister-in-law, Mrs. Henry Ware Eliot. An inscribed wedding photograph of the Eliots stands in a silver frame on a table. Mrs. Cohn and Mrs. Eliot sat on a sofa at one end of the room, while Mr. Eliot and the interviewer faced each other in the center. The microphone of a tape recorder lay on the floor between them.

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Mr. Eliot looked particularly well. He was visiting the United States briefly on his way back to London from a holiday in Nassau. He was tanned, and he seemed to have put on weight in the three years since the interviewer had seen him. Altogether, he looked younger and seemed jollier. He frequently glanced at Mrs. Eliot during the interview, as if he were sharing with her an answer which he was not making.

The interviewer had talked with Mr. Eliot previously in London. The small office at Faber and Faber, a few flights above Russell Square, displays a gallery of photographs on its walls: here is a large picture of Virginia Woolf, with an inset portrait of Pius XII; here are I. A. Richards, Paul Valery, W. B. Yeats, Goethe, Marianne Moore, Charles Whibley, Djuna Barnes and others. Many young poets have stared at the faces there, during a talk with Mr. Eliot. One of them has told a story which illustrates some of the unsuspected in Mr. Eliot's conversation. After an hour of serious literary discussion, Mr. Eliot paused to think if he had a final word of advice; the young poet, an American, was about to go up to Oxford as Mr. Eliot had done forty years before. Then, as gravely as if he were recommending salvation, Mr. Eliot advised the purchase of long woolen underwear because of Oxford's damp stone. Mr. Eliot is able to be avuncular while he is quite aware of comic disproportion between manner and message.

Similar combinations modified many of the comments which are reported here, and the ironies of gesture are invisible on the page. At times, actually, the interview moved from the ironic and the mildly comic to the hilarious. The tape is punctuated by the head-back Boom Boom of Mr. Eliot's laughter, particularly in response to mention of his early derogation of Ezra Pound, and to a question about the unpublished, and one gathers improper, King Bolo poems of his Harvard days.

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INTERVIEWER

Perhaps I can begin at the beginning. Do you remember the circumstances under which you began to write poetry in St. Louis when you were a boy?

ELIOT

I began I think about the age of fourteen, under the inspiration of Fitzgerald's *Omar Khayyam*, to write a number of very gloomy and atheistical and despairing quatrains in the same style, which fortunately I suppressed completely—so completely that they don't exist. I never showed them to anybody. The first poem that shows is one which appeared first in the *Smith Academy Record*, and later in *The Harvard Advocate*, which was written as an exercise for my English teacher and was an imitation of Ben Jonson. He thought it very good for a boy of fifteen or sixteen. Then I wrote a few at Harvard, just enough to qualify for election to an editorship on *The Harvard Advocate*, which I enjoyed. Then I had an outburst during my junior and senior years. I became much more prolific, under the influence first of Baudelaire and then of Jules Laforgue, whom I discovered I think in my Junior year at Harvard.

INTERVIEWER

Did anyone in particular introduce you to the French poets? Not Irving Babbitt, I suppose.

ELIOT

No, Babbitt would be the last person! The one poem that Babbitt always held up for admiration was Gray's *Elegy*. And that's a fine poem but I think this shows certain limitations on Babbitt's part, God bless him. I have advertised my source, I think; it's Arthur Symons's book on French poetry,[1] which I came across in the Harvard Union. In those days the Harvard Union was a meeting place for any undergraduate who chose to belong to it. They had a very nice little library, like the libraries in many Harvard houses now. I liked his quota-

[1] *The Symbolist Movement in Literature*

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tions and I went to a foreign book shop somewhere in Boston, (I've forgotten the name and I don't know whether it still exists) which specialized in French and German and other foreign books and found Laforgue, and other poets. I can't imagine why that bookshop should have had a few poets like Laforgue in stock. Goodness knows how long they'd had them or whether there were any other demands for them.

INTERVIEWER

When you were an undergraduate, were you aware of the dominating presence of any older poets? Today the poet in his youth is writing in the age of Eliot and Pound and Stevens. Can you remember your own sense of the literary times? I wonder if your situation may not have been extremely different.

ELIOT

I think it was rather an advantage not having any living poets in England or America in whom one took any particular interest. I don't know what it would be like but I think it would be a rather troublesome distraction to have such a lot of dominating presences, as you call them, about. Fortunately we weren't bothered by each other.

INTERVIEWER

Were you aware of people like Hardy or Robinson at all?

ELIOT

I was slightly aware of Robinson because I read an article about him in *The Atlantic Monthly* which quoted some of his poems, and that wasn't my cup of tea at all. Hardy was hardly known to be a poet at that time. One read his novels but his poetry only really became conspicuous to a later generation. Then there was Yeats but it was the early Yeats. It was too much Celtic twilight for me. There was really nothing except the people of the 90's who had all died of drink or suicide or one thing or another.

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INTERVIEWER

Did you and Conrad Aiken help each other with your poems, when you were co-editors on the *Advocate*?

ELIOT

We were friends but I don't think we influenced each other at all. When it came to foreign writers, he was more interested in Italian and Spanish, and I was all for the French.

INTERVIEWER

Were there any other friends who read your poems and helped you?

ELIOT

Well, yes. There was a man who was a friend of my brother's, a man named Thomas H. Thomas who lived in Cambridge and who saw some of my poems in *The Harvard Advocate*. He wrote me a most enthusiastic letter and cheered me up. And I wish I had his letters still. I was very grateful to him for giving me that encouragement.

INTERVIEWER

I understand that it was Conrad Aiken who introduced you and your work to Pound.

ELIOT

Yes it was. Aiken was a very generous friend. He tried to place some of my poems in London, one summer when he was over, with Harold Monro and others. Nobody would think of publishing them. He brought them back to me. Then in 1914, I think, we were both in London in the summer. He said, "You go to Pound. Show him your poems." He thought Pound might like them. Aiken liked them, though they were very different from his.

INTERVIEWER

Do you remember the circumstances of your first meeting with Pound?

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ELIOT

I think I went to call on him first. I think I made a good impression, in his little triangular sitting room in Kensington. He said "Send me your poems." And he wrote back, "This is as good as anything I've seen. Come around and have a talk about them." Then he pushed them on Harriet Monroe, which took a little time.

INTERVIEWER

In an article about your *Advocate* days, for the book in honor of your sixtieth birthday, Aiken quotes an early letter from England in which you refer to Pound's verse as "touchingly incompetent." I wonder when you changed your mind.

ELIOT

Hah! *That* was a bit brash, wasn't it? Pound's verse was first shown me by an editor of *The Harvard Advocate*, W. G. Tinckom-Fernandez, who was a crony of mine and Conrad Aiken's and the other Signet[1] poets of the period. He showed me those little things of Elkin Mathews, *Exultations* and *Personnae*.[2] He said, "This is up your street; you ought to like this." Well, I didn't, really. It seemed to me rather fancy old-fashioned romantic stuff, cloak and dagger kind of stuff. I wasn't very much impressed by it. When I went to see Pound, I was not particularly an admirer of his work, and though I now regard the work I saw then as very accomplished, I am certain that in his later work is to be found the grand stuff.

INTERVIEWER

You have mentioned in print that Pound cut *The Waste Land* from a much larger poem into its present form. Were you benefited by his criticism of your poems in general? Did he cut other poems?

ELIOT

Yes. At that period, yes. He was a marvellous critic

[1] Harvard's literary club.
[2] Early books of Pound, published by Elkin Mathews in 1909.

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because he didn't try to turn you into an imitation of himself. He tried to see what you were trying to do.

INTERVIEWER

Have you helped to rewrite any of your friends' poems? Ezra Pound's, for instance?

ELIOT

I can't think of any instances. Of course I have made innumerable suggestions on manuscripts of young poets in the last twenty-five years or so.

INTERVIEWER

Does the manuscript of the original, uncut *Waste Land* exist?

ELIOT

Don't ask me. That's one of the things I don't know. It's an unsolved mystery. I sold it to John Quinn. I also gave him a notebook of unpublished poems, because he had been kind to me in various affairs. That's the last I heard of them. Then he died and they didn't turn up at the sale.

INTERVIEWER

What sort of thing did Pound cut from *The Waste Land*? Did he cut whole sections?

ELIOT

Whole sections, yes. There was a long section about a shipwreck. I don't know what that had to do with anything else, but it was rather inspired by the Ulysses Canto in *The Inferno*, I think. Then there was another section which was an imitation *Rape of the Lock*. Pound said, "It's no use trying to do something that somebody else has done as well as it can be done. Do something different."

INTERVIEWER

Did the excisions change the intellectual structure of the poem?

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ELIOT

No. I think it was just as structureless, only in a more futile way, in the longer version.

INTERVIEWER

I have a question about the poem which is related to its composition. In *Thoughts After Lambeth* you denied the allegation of critics who said that you expressed "the disillusionment of a generation," in *The Waste Land*, or you denied that it was your intention. Now F. R. Leavis, I believe, has said that the poem exhibits no progression; yet on the other hand, more recent critics, writing after your later poetry, found *The Waste Land* Christian. I wonder if this was part of your intention.

ELIOT

No, it wasn't part of my conscious intention. I think that in *Thoughts After Lambeth*, I was speaking of intentions more in a negative than in a positive sense, to say what was not my intention. I wonder what an "intention" means! One wants to get something off one's chest. One doesn't know quite what it is that one wants to get off the chest until one's got it off. But I couldn't apply the word "intention" positively to any of my poems. Or to any poem.

INTERVIEWER

I have another question about you and Pound and your earlier career. I have read somewhere that you and Pound decided to write quatrains, in the late teens, because *vers libre* had gone far enough.

ELIOT

I think that's something Pound said. And the suggestion of writing quatrains was his. He put me onto *Emaux et Camées*.[1]

INTERVIEWER

I wonder about your ideas about the relation of form to

[1] poems by Théophile Gautier.

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subject. Would you then have chosen the form before you knew quite what you were going to write in it?

ELIOT

Yes, in a way. One studied originals. We studied Gautier's poems and then we thought, "Have I anything to say in which this form will be useful?" And we experimented. The form gave the impetus to the content.

INTERVIEWER

Why was *vers libre* the form you chose to use in your early poems?

ELIOT

My early *vers libre*, of course, was started under the endeavor to practice the same form as Laforgue. This meant merely rhyming lines of irregular length, with the rhymes coming in irregular places. It wasn't quite so *libre* as much *vers*, especially the sort which Ezra called "Amygism."[1] Then, of course, there were things in the next phase which were freer, like *Rhapsody on a Windy Night*. I don't know whether I had any sort of model or practice in mind when I did that. It just came that way.

INTERVIEWER

Did you feel, possibly, that you were writing against something, more than from any model? Against the poet laureate perhaps?

ELIOT

No, no, no. I don't think one was constantly trying to reject things, but just trying to find out what was right for oneself. One really ignored poet laureates as such, the Robert Bridges. I don't think good poetry can be produced in a kind of political attempt to overthrow some existing form. I think it just supercedes. People find a way in which they can say something. "I can't say it that way, what way can I find

[1] A reference to Amy Lowell, who captured and transformed imagism.

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that will do?" One didn't really *bother* about the existing modes.

INTERVIEWER

I think it was after *Prufrock* and before *Gerontion* that you wrote the poems in French which appear in your *Collected Poems*. I wonder how you happened to write them. Have you written any since?

ELIOT

No, and I never shall. That was a very curious thing which I can't altogether explain. At that period I thought I'd dried up completely. I hadn't written anything for some time and was rather desperate. I started writing a few things in French and found I *could*, at that period. I think it was that when I was writing in French I didn't take the poems so seriously, and that, not taking them seriously, I wasn't so worried about not being able to write. I did these things as a sort of *tour de force* to see what I could do. That went on for some months. The best of them have been printed. I must say that Ezra Pound went through them, and Edmond Dulac, a Frenchman we knew in London, helped with them a bit. We left out some, and I suppose they disappeared completely. Then I suddenly began writing in English again and lost all desire to go on with French. I think it was just something that helped me get started again.

INTERVIEWER

Did you think at all about becoming a French symbolist poet like the two Americans of the last century?

ELIOT

Stuart Merrill and Viele-Griffin. I only did that during the romantic year I spent in Paris after Harvard. I had at that time the idea of giving up English and trying to settle down and scrape along in Paris and gradually write French. But it would have been a foolish idea even if I'd been much more bilingual than I ever was, because, for one thing, I don't think that one can be a bilingual poet. I don't know of any

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case in which a man wrote great or even fine poems equally well in two languages. I think one language must be the one you express yourself in in poetry, and you've got to give up the other for that purpose. And I think that the English language really has more resources in some respects than the French. I think, in other words, I've probably done better in English than I ever would have in French even if I'd become as proficient in French as the poets you mentioned.

INTERVIEWER

Can I ask you if you have any plans for poems now?

ELIOT

No, I haven't any plans for anything at the moment, except that I think I would like, having just got rid of *The Elder Statesman*, (I only passed the final proofs just before we left London) to do a little prose writing of a critical sort. I never think more than one step ahead. Do I want to do another play or do I want to do more poems? I don't know until I find I want to do it.

INTERVIEWER

Do you have any unfinished poems that you look at occasionally?

ELIOT

I haven't much in that way, no. As a rule, with me an unfinished thing is a thing that might as well be rubbed out. It's better, if there's something good in it that I might make use of elsewhere, to leave it at the back of my mind than on paper in a drawer. If I leave it in a drawer it remains the same thing but if it's in the memory it becomes transformed into something else. As I have said before, *Burnt Norton* began with bits that had to be cut out of *Murder in the Cathedral*. I learned in *Murder in the Cathedral* that it's no use putting in nice lines that you think are good poetry if they don't get the action on at all. That was when Martin Browne was useful. He would say, "There are very nice lines here, but they've nothing to do with what's going on on stage."

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INTERVIEWER

Are any of your minor poems actually sections cut out of longer works? There are two that sound like *The Hollow Men*.

ELIOT

Oh, those were the preliminary sketches. Those things were earlier. Others I published in periodicals but not in my collected poems. You don't want to say the same thing twice in one book.

INTERVIEWER

You seem often to have written poems in sections. Did they begin as separate poems? I am thinking of *Ash Wednesday*, in particular.

ELIOT

Yes, like *The Hollow Men*, it originated out of separate poems. As I recall, one or two early drafts of parts of *Ash Wednesday* appeared in *Commerce* and elsewhere. Then gradually I came to see it as a sequence. That's one way in which my mind does seem to have worked throughout the years poetically—doing things separately and then seeing the possibility of fusing them together, altering them, and making a kind of whole of them.

INTERVIEWER

Do you write anything now in the vein of *Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats* or *King Bolo*?

ELIOT

Those things do come from time to time! I keep a few notes of such verse, and there are one or two incomplete cats that probably will never be written. There's one about a glamour cat. It turned out too sad. This would never do. I can't make my children weep over a cat who's gone wrong. She had a very questionable career, did this cat. It wouldn't do for the audience of my previous volume of cats. I've never done any dogs. Of course dogs don't seem to lend themselves to verse quite so well, collectively, as cats. I may eventually

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do an enlarged edition of my cats. That's more likely than another volume. I did add one poem, which was originally done as an advertisement for Faber and Faber. It seemed to be fairly successful. Oh yes, one wants to keep one's hand in, you know, in every type of poem, serious and frivolous and proper and improper. One doesn't want to lose one's skill.

INTERVIEWER

There's a good deal of interest now in the process of writing. I wonder if you could talk more about your actual habits in writing verse. I've heard you composed on the typewriter.

ELIOT

Partly on the typewriter. A great deal of my new play, *The Elder Statesman*, was produced in pencil and paper, very roughly. Then I typed it myself first before my wife got to work on it. In typing myself I make alterations, very considerable ones. But whether I write or type, composition of any length, a play for example, means for me regular hours, say ten to one. I found that three hours a day is about all I can do of actual composing. I could do polishing perhaps later. I sometimes found at first that I wanted to go on longer, but when I looked at the stuff the next day, what I'd done after the three hours were up was never satisfactory. It's much better to stop and think about something else quite different.

INTERVIEWER

Did you ever write any of your non-dramatic poems on schedule? Perhaps the *Four Quartets*?

ELIOT

Only "occasional" verse. The *Quartets* were not on schedule. Of course the first one was written in '35, but the three which were written during the war were more in fits and starts. In 1939 if there hadn't been a war I would probably have tried to write another play. And I think it's a very good thing I didn't have the opportunity. From my personal point of view, the one good thing the war did was to prevent me

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from writing another play too soon. I saw some of the things that were wrong with *Family Reunion*, but I think it was much better that any possible play was blocked for five years or so to get up a head of steam. The form of the *Quartets* fitted in very nicely to the conditions under which I was writing, or could write at all. I could write them in sections and I didn't have to have quite the same continuity; it didn't matter if a day or two elapsed when I did not write, as they frequently did, while I did war jobs.

INTERVIEWER

We have been mentioning your plays without talking about them. In *Poetry and Drama* you talked about your first plays. I wonder if you could tell us something about your intentions in *The Elder Statesman*.

ELIOT

I said something, I think, in *Poetry and Drama* about my ideal aims, which I never expect fully to realize. I started, really, from *The Family Reunion*, because *Murder in the Cathedral* is a period piece and something out of the ordinary. It is written in rather a special language, as you do when you're dealing with another period. It didn't solve any of the problems I was interested in. Later I thought that in *The Family Reunion* I was giving so much attention to the versification that I neglected the structure of the play. I think *The Family Reunion* is still the best of my plays in the way of poetry, although it's not very well constructed.

In *The Cocktail Party* and again in *The Confidential Clerk*, I went further in the way of structure. *The Cocktail Party* wasn't altogether satisfactory in that respect. It sometimes happens, disconcertingly, at any rate with a practitioner like myself, that it isn't always the things constructed most according to plan that are the most successful. People criticized the third act of *The Cocktail Party* as being rather an epilogue, so in *The Confidential Clerk* I wanted things to turn up in the third act which were fresh events. Of course, *The Confidential*

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Clerk was so well constructed in some ways that people thought it was just meant to be farce.

I wanted to get to learn the technique of the theatre so well that I could then forget about it. I always feel it's not wise to violate rules until you know how to observe them.

I hope that *The Elder Statesman* goes further in getting more poetry in, at any rate, than *The Confidential Clerk* did. I don't feel that I've got to the point I aim at and I don't think I ever will, but I would like to feel I was getting a little nearer to it each time.

INTERVIEWER

Do you have a Greek model behind *The Elder Statesman*?

ELIOT

The play in the background is the *Oedipus at Colonus*. But I wouldn't like to refer to my Greek originals as models. I have always regarded them more as points of departure. That was one of the weaknesses of *The Family Reunion*; it was rather too close to the *Eumenides*. I tried to follow my original too literally and in that way led to confusion by mixing pre-Christian and post-Christian attitudes about matters of conscience and sin and guilt.

So in the subsequent three I have tried to take the Greek myth as a sort of springboard, you see. After all, what one gets essential and permanent, I think, in the old plays, is a situation. You can take the situation, rethink it in modern terms, develop your own characters from it, and let another plot develop out of that. Actually you get further and further away from the original. *The Cocktail Party* had to do with Alcestis simply because the question arose in my mind, what would the life of Admetus and Alcestis be, after she'd come back from the dead; I mean if there'd been a break like that, it couldn't go on just as before. Those two people were the center of the thing when I started and the other characters only developed out of it. The character of Celia, who came to be really the most important character in the play, was originally an appendage to a domestic situation.

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INTERVIEWER

Do you still hold to the theory of levels in poetic drama (plot, character, diction, rhythm, meaning) which you put forward in 1932?

ELIOT

I am no longer very much interested in my own theories about poetic drama, especially those put forward before 1934. I have thought less about theories since I have given more time to writing for the theater.

INTERVIEWER

How does the writing of a play differ from the writing of poems?

ELIOT

I feel that they take quite different approaches. There is all the difference in the world between writing a play for an audience and writing a poem, in which you're writing primarily for yourself—although obviously you wouldn't be satisfied if the poem didn't mean something to other people afterward. With a poem you can say, "I got my feeling into words for myself. I now have the equivalent in words for that much of what I have felt." Also in a poem you're writing for your own voice, which is very important. You're thinking in terms of your own voice, whereas in a play from the beginning you have to realize that you're preparing something which is going into the hands of other people, unknown at the time you're writing it. Of course I won't say there aren't moments in a play when the two approaches may not converge, when I think ideally they *should*. Very often in Shakespeare they do, when he is writing a poem and thinking in terms of the theatre and the actors and the audience all at once. And the two things are one. That's wonderful when you can get that. With me it only happens at odd moments.

INTERVIEWER

Have you tried at all to control the speaking of your verse by the actors? To make it seem more like verse?

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ELIOT

I leave that primarily to the producer. The important thing is to have a producer who has the feeling of verse and who can guide them in just how emphatic to make the verse, just how far to depart from prose or how far to approach it. I only guide the actors if they ask me questions directly. Otherwise I think that they should get their advice through the producer. The important thing is to arrive at an agreement with him first, and then leave it to him.

INTERVIEWER

Do you feel that there's been a general tendency in your work, even in your poems, to move from a narrower to a larger audience?

ELIOT

I think that there are two elements in this. One is that I think that writing plays (that is *Murder in the Cathedral* and *The Family Reunion*) made a difference to the writing of the *Four Quartets*. I think that it led to a greater simplification of language and to speaking in a way which is more like conversing with your reader. I see the later *Quartets* as being much simpler and easier to understand than *The Waste Land* and *Ash Wednesday*. Sometimes the thing I'm trying to say, the subject matter, may be difficult, but it seems to me that I'm saying it in a simpler way.

The other element that enters into it, I think, is just experience and maturity. I think that in the early poems it was a question of not being able to—of having more to say than one knew how to say, and having something one wanted to put into words and rhythm which one didn't have the command of words and rhythm to put in a way immediately apprehensible.

That type of obscurity comes when the poet is still at the stage of learning how to use language. You have to say the thing the difficult way. The only alternative is not saying it at all, at that stage. By the time of *The Four Quartets*, I couldn't have written in the style of *The Waste Land*. In *The Waste*

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Land, I wasn't even bothering whether I understood what I was saying. These things, however, become easier to people with time. You get used to having *The Waste Land*, or *Ulysses*, about.

INTERVIEWER

Do you feel that *The Four Quartets* are your best work?

ELIOT

Yes, and I'd like to feel that they get better as they go on. The second is better than the first, the third is better than the second, and the fourth is the best of all. At any rate, that's the way I flatter myself.

INTERVIEWER

This is a very general question, but I wonder if you could give advice to a young poet about what disciplines or attitudes he might cultivate to improve his art.

ELIOT

I think it's awfully dangerous to give general advice. I think the best one can do for a young poet is to criticize in detail a particular poem of his. Argue it with him if necessary; give him your opinion, and if there are any generalizations to be made, let him do them himself. I've found that different people have different ways of working and things come to them in different ways. You're never sure when you're uttering a statement that's generally valid for all poets or when it's something that only applies to yourself. I think nothing is worse than to try to form people in your own image.

INTERVIEWER

Do you think there's any possible generalization to be made about the fact that all the better poets now, younger than you, seem to be teachers?

ELIOT

I don't know. I think the only generalization that can be made of any value will be one which will be made a genera-

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tion later. All you can say at this point is that at different times there are different possibilities of making a living, or different limitations on making a living. Obviously a poet has got to find a way of making a living apart from his poetry. After all, artists do a great deal of teaching, and musicians too.

INTERVIEWER

Do you think that the optimal career for a poet would involve no work at all but writing and reading?

ELIOT

No, I think that would be—but there again one can only talk about oneself. It is very dangerous to give an optimal career for everybody, but I feel quite sure that if I'd started by having independent means, if I hadn't had to bother about earning a living and could have given all my time to poetry, it would have had a deadening influence on me.

INTERVIEWER

Why?

ELIOT

I think that for me it's been very useful to exercise other activities, such as working in a bank, or publishing even. And I think also that the difficulty of not having as much time as I would like has given me a greater pressure of concentration. I mean it has prevented me from writing too much. The danger, as a rule, of having nothing else to do is that one might write too much rather than concentrating and perfecting smaller amounts. That would be *my* danger.

INTERVIEWER

Do you consciously attempt, now, to keep up with the poetry that is being written by young men in England and America?

ELIOT

I don't now, not with any conscientiousness. I did at one time when I was reading little reviews and looking out for

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new talent as a publisher. But as one gets older, one is not quite confident in one's own ability to distinguish new genius among younger men. You're always afraid that you are going as you have seen your elders go. At Faber and Faber now I have a younger colleague who reads poetry manuscripts. But even before that, when I came across new stuff that I thought had real merit, I would show it to younger friends whose critical judgment I trusted and get their opinion. But of course there is always the danger that there is merit where you don't see it. So I'd rather have younger people to look at things first. If they like it, they will show it to me, and see whether I like it too. When you get something that knocks over younger people of taste and judgment and older people as well, then that's likely to be something important. Sometimes there's a lot of resistance. I shouldn't like to feel that I was resisting, as my work was resisted when it was new, by people who thought that it was imposture of some kind or other.

INTERVIEWER

Do you feel that younger poets in general have repudiated the experimentalism of the early poetry of this century? Few poets now seem to be resisted the way you were resisted, but some older critics like Herbert Read believe that poetry after you has been a regression to out-dated modes. When you talked about Milton the second time, you spoke of the function of poetry as a retarder of change, as well as a maker of change, in language.

ELIOT

Yes, I don't think you want a revolution every ten years.

INTERVIEWER

But is it possible to think that there has been a counter-revolution rather than an exploration of new possibilities?

ELIOT

No, I don't see anything that looks to me like a counter-revolution. After a period of getting away from the traditional

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forms, comes a period of curiosity in making new experiments with traditional forms. This can produce very good work if what has happened in between has made a difference: when it's not merely going back, but taking up an old form, which has been out of use for a time, and making something new with it. That is not counter-revolution. Nor does mere regression deserve the name. There is a tendency in some quarters to revert to Georgian scenery and sentiments: and among the public there are always people who prefer mediocrity, and when they get it, say "What a relief! Here's some real poetry again." And there are also people who like poetry to be modern but for whom the really creative stuff is too strong—they need something diluted.

What seems to me the best of what I've seen in young poets is not reaction at all. I'm not going to mention any names, for I don't like to make public judgments about younger poets. The best stuff is a further development of a less revolutionary character than what appeared in earlier years of the century.

INTERVIEWER

I have some unrelated questions that I'd like to end with. In 1945 you wrote "a poet must take as his material his own language as it is actually spoken around him." And later you wrote, "the music of poetry, then, will be a music latent in the common speech of his time." After the second remark, you disparaged "standardized BBC English." Now isn't one of the changes of the last fifty years, and perhaps even more of the last five years, the growing dominance of commercial speech through the means of communication? What you referred to as "BBC English" has become immensely more powerful through the ITA and BBC television, not to speak of CBS, NBC, and ABC. Does this development make the problem of the poet and his relationship to common speech more difficult?

ELIOT

You've raised a very good point there. I think you're right, it does make it more difficult.

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INTERVIEWER

I wanted *you* to make the point.

ELIOT

Yes, but you wanted the point to be *made*. So I'll take the responsibility of making it: I do think that where you have these modern means of communication and means of imposing the speech and idioms of a small number on the mass of people at large, it does complicate the problem very much. I don't know to what extent that goes for film speech, but obviously radio speech has done much more.

INTERVIEWER

I wonder if there's a possibility that what you mean by common speech will disappear.

ELIOT

That is a very gloomy prospect. But very likely indeed.

INTERVIEWER

Are there other problems for a writer in our time which are unique? Does the prospect of human annihilation have any particular effect on the poet?

ELIOT

I don't see why the prospect of human annihilation should affect the poet differently from men of other vocations. It will affect him as a human being, no doubt in proportion to his sensitiveness.

INTERVIEWER

Another unrelated question: I can see why a man's criticism is better for his being a practicing poet, better although subject to his own prejudices. But do you feel that writing criticism has helped you as a poet?

ELIOT

In an indirect way it has helped me somehow as a poet—to

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put down in writing my critical valuation of the poets who have influenced me and whom I admire. It is merely making an influence more conscious and more articulate. It's been a rather natural impulse. I think probably my best critical essays are essays on the poets who had influenced me, so to speak, long before I thought of writing essays about them. They're of more value, probably, than any of my more generalized remarks.

INTERVIEWER

G. S. Fraser wonders, in an essay about the two of you, whether you ever met Yeats. From remarks in your talk about him, it would seem that you did. Could you tell us the circumstances?

ELIOT

Of course I had met Yeats many times. Yeats was always very gracious when one met him and had the art of treating younger writers as if they were his equals and contemporaries. I can't remember any one particular occasion.

INTERVIEWER

I have heard that you consider that your poetry belongs in the tradition of American literature. Could you tell us why?

ELIOT

I'd say that my poetry has obviously more in common with my distinguished contemporaries in America, than with anything written in my generation in England. That I'm sure of.

INTERVIEWER

Do you think there's a connection with the American past?

ELIOT

Yes, but I couldn't put it any more definitely than that, you see. It wouldn't be what it is, and I imagine it wouldn't be so good; putting it as modestly as I can, it wouldn't be what it is

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if I'd been born in England, and it wouldn't be what it is if I'd stayed in America. It's a combination of things. But in its sources, in its emotional springs, it comes from America.

INTERVIEWER

One last thing. Seventeen years ago you said, "No honest poet can ever feel quite sure of the permanent value of what he has written. He may have wasted his time and messed up his life for nothing." Do you feel the same now, at seventy?

ELIOT

There may be honest poets who do feel sure. I don't.

—DONALD HALL

(This is the first of a new series of interviews on the Art of Poetry which THE PARIS REVIEW *will publish along with its outstanding series on The Art of Fiction. Included in the latter collection were such authors as E. M. Forster, Thornton Wilder, William Faulkner, Ernest Hemingway, Alberto Moravia, Francois Mauriac, Henry Green, James Jones and others. Future issues will have interviews with Lawrence Durrell, W. Somerset Maugham, Kingsley Amis, André Malraux, and Jean Cocteau.)*

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CROW HILL

The farms are stinking craters in
Sheer sides under the sodden moors;
When it is not wind it is rain,
Neither of which will stop at doors:
One will damp beds and the other shake
Dreams beneath sleep it cannot break.

Between the weather and the rock
Farmers make a little heat;
Cows that sway a bony back,
Pigs upon delicate feet
Hold off the sky, trample the strength
That shall level these hills at length.

Buttoned from the blowing mist
Walk the ridges of ruined stone;
What humbles these hills has raised
The arrogance of blood and bone,
And thrown the hawk upon the wind,
And lit the fox in the dripping ground.

—TED HUGHES

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TWO POEMS BY ROBERT BLY

What We Have Inherited From the Intellectual Leadership of New England

I

The shrouded figure struggling to break from the coffin;
The sea giving out muffled cries by night;
The black hose damning the wild river.

II

I saw a vision of Cotton Mather, leading
The Puritans into the gate of hell,
Lighting the way with a pine bough giving off darkness,
And a black hen was walking on his chest.

III

The thorns of the woods of Massachusetts,
The black horse in Cotton Mather's dreams,
The cloud walking over the face of the sea,
And the mad form swinging in the branches,
The comb filled with blood; horses rearing at night.

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Salute To
All the Countries which Helped Franco

Sound of thigh bones dancing
Wakes the West. There,
There are the gold bones, there
Are black snakes leaping
Over stalls, white
Ryestraw and deep in the swing
The wild babe sleeping:
Blazing sea fire,
Flames of the sea, in the dark
Comes in, black horses
Gallop round all,
Ending the vision of light.
If I start now,
Thinking black thoughts
Over the streets and the slums
Of ash and gravel,
Can I speak them?
Rubble in Russia and Spain,
The best die, Franco
With his black head
Touching the heads of the world
Is helped to Northwards
While the bare feet
Move to the South.
The small head watches
While its feet burn.
Is this the bitter sea?

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ALL THE SPRING BABIES

Like a cavalry charging, productive loins
in parallel
Straddle baby carriages;
Long-cheeked mothers gossip like horses neighing.
In the mobile crib sunlight is resented
By the pink face experienced of darkness.

Momentarily these dividing carriaged
miniatures of man, harmless as dolls,
These excresences of a winter's lust
Woo by their cunning smallness
Neglect of fear for their victorious
lebensraum.

Delicate-stomached,
Fed freely by their huge and silly slaves,
They are almost as colorless,
as deceptively formless
as when they crawled through
the lines of our love
into existence.

—DAVID RAY

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GOING BACK

Just where my long road started out, it ends.
I stand alone and see my childhood town
Calling its kids and saying goodnight to friends.
And now the ruffled window shades draw down.

Old men and women, slumped in easy chairs,
Fold up their papers, yawn, and cease to talk.
I know that only a tireless streetlamp cares
Where I, a ghost with fisted pockets, walk.

Shadow and I, we play a little game
Of hide-and-seek, as we have always done.
Ten years ago I had a boy's nickname,
Voiced in the streets and known by everyone.

That name, those years, companions that I had—
Channing the fiddler and the girls next door,
The roughneck gang that drove my father mad,
Trampling his flowers in their relentless war—

Where are they now, so dear and out of date?
Old men and women yawn but do not stir
The burned-out embers, and the hour is late.
Someone is calling but I can't see her.

"Sneakthief!" she cries. "You've waited here too long,
Thinking of them, beside an old streetlamp.
Shadow will fall on you and he will throng
Your reckless head and beat you for a tramp.

"And when you go back home—to your own home—
No one will know you. Peering through a crack
Familiar eyes will say, 'Too bad you've come,'
Familiar lips will mutter, 'Don't come back.' "

—DONALD PETERSON

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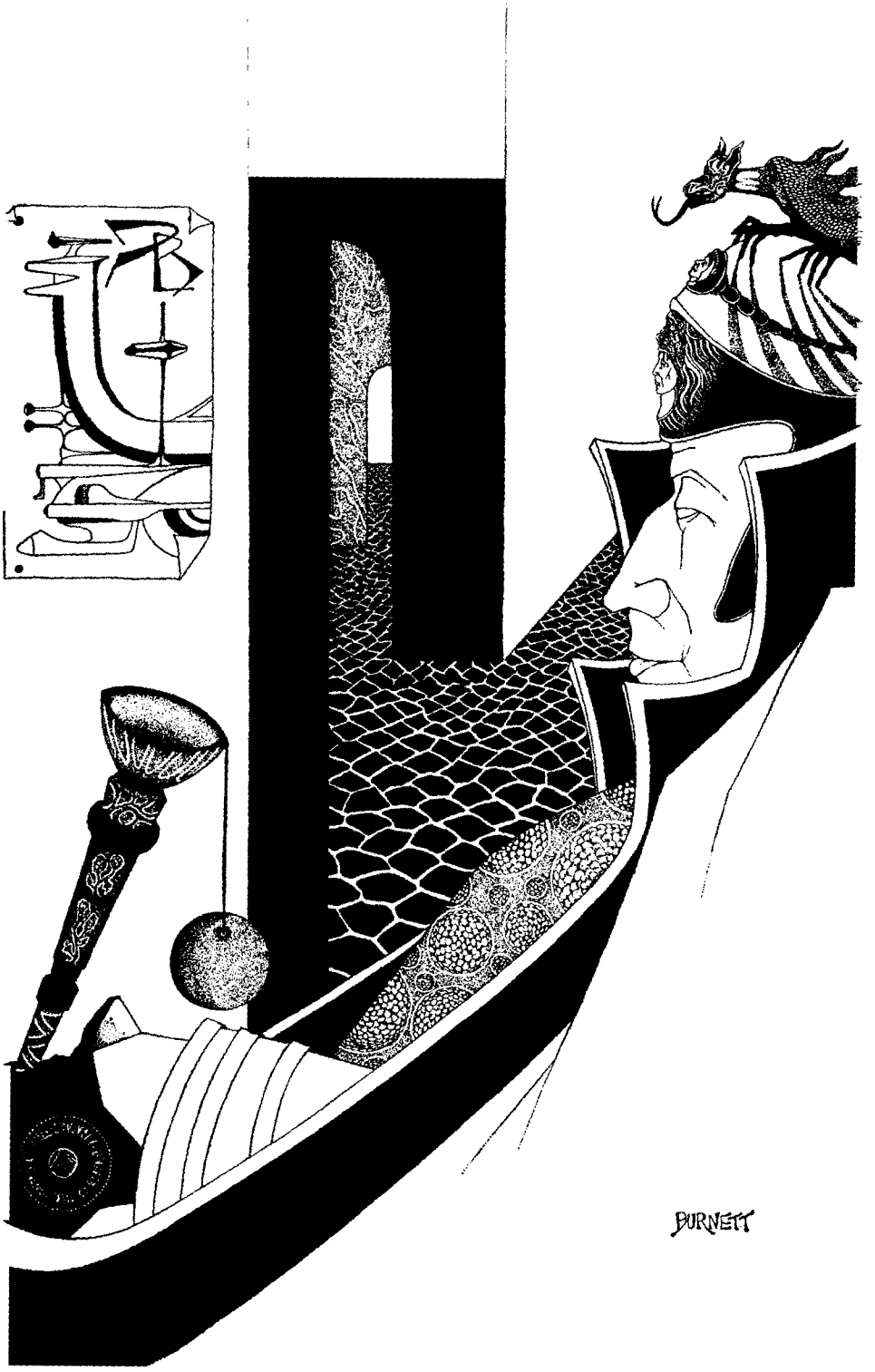

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TERRY SOUTHERN

GRAND GUY GRAND

WHEN not tending New York holdings, Guy Grand was generally, as he expressed it, "*on the go.*" He took cross-country trips by train: New York to Miami, Miami to Seattle —that sort of thing—always on a slow train, one that makes frequent stops. Accommodation on these trains is limited and, though he did engage the best, Grand often had to be satisfied with scarcely more than the essentials of comfort. But he didn't mind, and on this particular summer afternoon, at precisely 2:05, he stepped onto the first pullman of the *Portland Plougher*, found his compartment, and began the pleasant routine of settling in for the long slow trip to New York. As was his habit, he immediately rang the porter to bring round a large bottle of Campari and a thermos of finely-iced water; then he sat down at his desk to write business letters.

It was known that for any personal service Grand was inclined to tip generously, and because of this there were usually three or four porters loitering in the corridor near his compartment. They kept a sharp eye on the compartment-door, in case Grand should signal some need or other; and, as the train pulled out of the station, they could hear him moving about inside, humming to himself, and shuffling papers to and fro on his desk. Before the train made its first stop, however, they would have to scurry, for Grand's orders were that the porters should not be seen when he came out of his compartment; and he did come out, at every stop.

At the first of these stops, which was not long in coming, Grand quickly went to the adjoining day-coach and took a seat by the window. There he was able to lean out and observe the activity on the platform—attracting little attention

—Drawing by David Burnett

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himself, resembling as he did, with his pleasant red face, any honest farmer.

From the train window one could see over and beyond the station the rest of the small New England town—motionless now in the summer afternoon, like a toy mausoleum— while all that seemed to live within the town was being skillfully whipped underground and funneled up again in swift urgency onto the station platform, where small square cartons were unloaded from a central car.

But amidst the confusion of the platform, there was one recognizable figure; this was the man who sold hotdogs from a box he carried strapped to his neck.

"They're *red-hot!*" he cried repeatedly, walking up and down parallel to the train and only a foot from it.

Grand, after a minute of general observation, focused all his attention on this person and, at exactly one minute before departure, he began his case with the hotdog-man.

"Red-hot!" he shouted; and when the man reached the window, Grand eyed him shrewdly for a second, squinting, as though appraising his character, before asking, tight-lipped:

"*How much?*"

"Twenty-cents," the man said hurriedly—for the train was about to pull out—"...mustard and relish, they're *red-hot!*"

"Done!" Grand said with a sober nod, and as the train actually began to move forward and the hotdog-man to walk rapidly in keeping abreast of the window, Guy Grand leaned out and handed him a five-hundred dollar bill.

"Break this?" he asked tersely.

The hotdog-man, in trying to utilize all their remaining time, passed the hotdog to Grand and reached into his change pocket even before having looked carefully at the bill—so that by the time he made out its denomination, he was running almost full tilt, grimacing oddly and shaking his head, trying to return the bill with one hand and recover the hotdog with the other. During their final second together, with the hotdog-man's last overwhelming effort to reach his outstretched hand, Grand reached into his own coat pocket and took out a plastic animal-mask—that of a pig—which he

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quickly donned before beginning to gorge the hotdog in through the mouth of the mask, at the same time reaching out wildly for the bill, yet managing somehow to keep it just beyond his finger's grasp, and continuing with this while the distance between the two men lengthened, hopelessly, until at last the hotdog-man stood exhausted on the end of the platform, still holding the five-hundred dollar bill, and staring after the vanishing train.

When Grand finally drew himself back from the window, it was to face a middle-aged woman across the aisle who was sitting half twisted in her seat, observing Grand with a curiosity so intense that the instant of their eyes actually meeting did not seem to register with her. Then she coughed and glanced away—but irresistibly back again, as Guy Grand rose, all smiles, to leave the day-coach, giving the woman an affectionate wink of conspiracy as he did.

"Just having a laugh with that hot-frank vendor," he explained, "...no real harm done, surely."

He returned to his compartment then, where he sat at the desk, sipping his Campari—a drink the color of raspberries, but extremely bitter—and speculating about the possible reactions of the hotdog-man.

Outside the compartment, even at the far end of the corridor, the idle porters could often hear his soft odd chortle as he stirred about inside.

"Grand-Guy" Guy Grand was a billionaire. He had 180 millions cash-deposit in New York banks, and this ready-capital was but a part of his gross holdings.

At 53, Grand had a thick trunk and a large balding bullet-head; his face was quite pink, so that in certain half-lights he looked like a fat radish-man—though not too displeasingly so, for he always sported well-cut clothes and, near the throat, a diamond the size of a nickle.

Grand's associates, wealthy men themselves, saw nothing extraordinary about him: a reticent man of simple tastes they thought, a man who had come into most of his money and

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had preserved it through large safe investments in steel, rubber, and oil. And though it was true—as happened often enough at conference-table—that Grand would come forward with the incisive remark expected from men of his station, he was called "Grand-Guy" because of some forgotten thing he had done as a young man, or perhaps more than anything else, because he properly looked the part of a billionaire, dressing as he did, a cut above the rest. What his associates managed to see in Grand was usually a reflection of their own dullness: a club-member, a dinner guest, a possibility, a threat—a man whose holdings represented a prospect and a danger. But this was to do injustice to Grand's private life, because his private life was *atypical*. For one thing, he was the last of the big spenders; and for another, he had a very unusual attitude towards *people*— he spent about ten millions a year in, as he expressed it himself, "*making it hot for them.*"

This rather grandiose pastime had begun a few years previously, when he bought a large movie-house in Cleveland and made inserts into the first-run films shown there—simple inserts: a quick cut to a groping hand, an eccentric grimace, a cryptic smile—all professionally done and technically indiscernable from the rest of the film; they were usually of only split-second duration, but were unmistakably seen by anyone not half asleep. Very often these inserts had the effect of completely misplacing the emphasis and direction of the film. In a popular movie called "Mrs. Miniver," for example, there is a scene, quite early on, where the good school-master, Walter Pidgeon, is sitting quietly at his desk in his fire-lit study; he is writing in his journal about having that afternoon made the acquaintance of Mrs. Miniver, and he pauses momentarily from this to take a small knife from the desk and sharpen the pencil in his hand. In the original scene, the camera remains on his face, which is hopeful and meditative—so that the intended emphasis of the scene is quite clear: his genteel and wistfully ambitious thoughts concerning Mrs. Miniver. Grand's insert however, consisted of a cut, away from the face and down to the knife in his hand, holding on this for about two seconds. Given such emphasis, the fire-glint blade

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seemed to portend dire evil, though afterwards, of course, the film rolled on again, without further surprise or incongruity—while high above the dark audience, locked in the projection booth, Grand Guy Grand stumbled from wall to wall almost choking with laughter.

Later he might go down into the lobby to listen to the comments about the film from those leaving, and as often as not, he would join in himself:

"What was that about the *knife?!?*" he would demand querulously, stalking around the lobby, striking his fist in his hand. "He *had* that knife—Christ, I thought he was going to *kill* her! *I* don't get it!"

Some of Grand's inserts, though, were a good deal more flagrant, and his cinema was eventually sued by several of the big studios; you can bet it cost him a pretty penny in the end to keep his own name clear.

Leaving the great west door at Penn Station, Guy Grand's gait was brisk indeed, considering his girth—small sharp steps, rising on the toes—it was the gait of a man who appears to be snapping his fingers as he walks.

Half a block on he reached the car, though he seemed to have a momentary difficulty in recognizing it; beneath the windshield-wiper lay a big parking-ticket, which Grand slowly withdrew, regarding it curiously.

"Looks like you've got a *ticket*, bub," said a voice somewhere behind him. Out of the corner of his eye Grand observed the man, in a dark summer suit, leaning idly against the side of the building nearest the car. There was something smug and terse in the tone of his remark, a sort of nasal piousness.

"Yes, so it seems," mused Grand without looking up, continuing to study the ticket in his hand. "How much will you eat it for?" he asked then, raising a piercing smile at the man.

"How's that, Mister?" demanded the latter with a nasty frown, pushing himself forward a bit from the building.

Grand cleared his throat, slowly taking out his wallet as he

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did—a long slender wallet of such fine leather it would have been as limp as silk, had it not been so chock-full of thousands.

"I asked what would you take to *eat* it? You know..." Wide-eyed, he made a great chewing motion with his mouth, holding the ticket near it.

The man, glaring, took a tentative step forward.

"Say, I don't *get* you, Mister!"

"Well," drawled Grand, chuckling down at his wallet, browsing about in it, "simple enough really..." he took out a few thou, "I have this ticket, as you know, and I was just wondering if you would *eat* it, for, say..." a quick glance to ascertain, "...six thousand dollars?"

"What do you mean, '*eat* it'?" demanded the man in a kind of snarl. "Say, what're you, anyway, bub, a *wise* guy?"

"'*Wise*' guy or '*grand*' guy—call me anything you like... as long as you don't call me '*late-for-chow*'! Eh? Ho-ho." Grand rounded off with a jolly chortle, but was quick to add, unsmiling: "How about it, pal—got a taste for the easy green?"

The man, who now appeared to be openly angry, took another step forward.

"*Listen*, Mister..." he said in a threatening tone, half-clenching his fists.

"I think I should warn you," said Grand quietly, raising one hand to his breast, "that I am armed."

"*Huh?*"

The man seemed momentarily dumbfounded, staring down in dull rage at the six bills in Grand's hand; then he partially recovered and cocked his head to one side, regarding Grand narrowly, in an attempt at shrewd skepticism, still heavily flavored with indignation.

"Just who do you think you *are*, Mister?!? Just what is your *game*!?!"

"Grand's the name, easy-green's the game—play along?" He brusquely flicked the corners of the six bills, and they crackled with a brittle, compelling sound.

"*Listen*..." said the man, tight-lipped, flexing his fingers and exhaling several times in angry exasperation, "are *you*

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trying... are *you* trying to tell ME that you'll give me *six thousand dollars*... to...to EAT that?!?" he pointed stiffly at the ticket, "... to *eat* that TICKET?!?"

"That's about the size of it," said Grand. He glanced at his watch. "It's what you might call a 'limited offer'—expiring in, let's say *one minute*."

"Listen, Mister," said the man between clenched teeth, "if this is a gag, *so help me*..." he shook his head to show how serious he was.

"No threats," Grand cautioned, "or I'll shoot you in the temple—well, what say? Forty-eight seconds left."

"Let's *see* that god-damn money!" exclaimed the man, quite beside himself now, grabbing at the bills.

Grand allowed him to examine them as he continued to regard his watch. "Thirty-nine seconds remaining," he announced solemnly. "Shall I start the *big count-down*?"

Without waiting for the latter's reply, he stepped back and, cupping his hands like a megaphone, began dramatically intoning: "*Twenty-eight... twenty-seven... twenty-six...*" while the man made several wildly gesticulated and incoherent remarks before seizing the ticket, ripping off a quarter of it with his teeth and beginning to chew.

"*Stout fellow!*" cried Grand warmly, breaking off the count-down to step forward and give the chap a hearty clap on the shoulder and hand him the six thousand.

"You needn't actually eat the ticket," he explained, "I was just curious to see if you had your price." He gave a wink and a tolerant chuckle. "Most of us have, I suppose. Eh? Ho-ho."

And with a grand wave of his hand, he stepped inside his car and sped away, leaving the man in the dark summer suit standing on the sidewalk, staring after him, agog.

Grand drove leisurely up the East River Drive —to a large and fine old house in the Sixties, where he lived with his two elderly sister-aunts, Agnes and Esther Edwards.

He found them in the drawing-room when he arrived.

"*There* you are, Guy!" said Agnes Edwards with tart affection, she who at 86 was a year senior to Esther and held the initiative in most things between them.

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"Guy, Guy, Guy," exclaimed Esther happily in her turn, and with a really beautiful pink smile for him, but insisted then upon raising her teacup, so that all to be seen was her brow, softly clouded now as ever in maternal concern for the boy. Both women were terribly, chronically, troubled that Guy, at 53, was unmarried—though perhaps each, in her way, would have fought against it.

Guy beamed from the doorway, then crossed the room to kiss them before going to his big sofa-chair by the window where he always sat.

"We're just having tea, darling—*do!*" insisted his Aunt Agnes with brittle passion, flourishing her little silver service-bell in a smart tinkle and presenting her half-upturned face for his kiss—as though to receive it perfunctorily, but with eyelids closed and tremoring, one noticed, and her other very thin hand, as in reflex, starting to rise towards their faces, wavering up, clenched white as the lace at her wrists.

"*Guy, Guy, Guy,*" cried Esther again, sharpening her own gaity as she sat her cup down, quickly enough but with a care that gave her away.

"You *will* take tea won't you, my Guy!" said Agnes, and she conveyed it in a glance to the maid who'd appeared.

"Love some," said Guy Grand, giving his aunts such a smile of fanatic brightness that they both squirmed a bit. He was in good spirits now after his trip—but soon enough, as the two women could attest, he would fall away from them, lapse into mystery behind his great gray *Financial Times*, for hours on end: distrait, they thought; never speaking, certainly answering, yes—but most often in an odd and distant tone that told them nothing, nothing...

Grand's work in cinema-management and film-editing apparently did not diminish his strong feeling for dramatic theatre, so that with the cultural ascension of television-drama he was all the more keen to get, as he put it, "*back on the boards.*"

"There's no biz like show-biz," he liked to quip, "... oh,

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we have our ups and downs, *sure*—but I'd trade one whiff of grease paint on opening night, by gosh, for all the darn chateaux of France!"

Thus did he enter the field, not nominally of course, but in effect. There was at this time a rather successful drama-hour on Sunday evening. "Our Town Playhouse" it was called and was devoted to serious fare; at least it was described to the viewers as being serious fare—truth to tell though, it was, by any civilized standard, the crassest sort of sham, cant, and weak-kneed pornography imaginable. Grand set about to interfere with it.

His arrival on the scene was fairly propitious; the production in dress-rehearsal at that moment was called "*All Our Yesterdays*," a drama which, according to the sponsors, was to be, concerning certain emotions and view-points, more or less *definitive*.

Beginning with this production, Grand made it a practice that he or his representatives contact the hero or heroine of each play, while it was still in rehearsal, and reach some sort of understanding about the final production. A million, tax-free, was generally sufficient.

The arrangement between Grand and the leading actress of "*All Our Yesterdays*" was simplicity itself. During final production, that is to say, the Sunday night nation-wide presentation of the play, and at the top of her big end-of-the-second-act scene, the heroine suddenly turned away from the other players, approached the camera, and addressed the viewers, point-blank:

"Anyone who would allow this slobbering pomp and drivel in his home has less sense and taste than the beasts of the field!"

Then she strode off the set.

Half the remaining actors turned to stare after her in amazement, while the others sat frozen in their last attidudes. There was a frenzy of muffled whispers heard coming from off-stage:

"What the hell!"

"Cue! Cue!"

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"*Fade it! For Christ's sake, fade it!*"

Then there was a bit of commotion before it was actually faded—one of the supporting actors had been trained in Russian methods and thought he could improvise the rest of the play, about twelve minutes, so there were one or two odd lines spoken by him in this attempt before the scene jerkily faded to blackness. A short documentary about tarpon-fishing was put on to fill out the balance of the hour.

The only explanation was that the actress had been struck by temporary insanity; but, even so, front-office temper ran high.

On the following Sunday, the production of "*Main Street, U.S.A.*" took an unexpected turn while the leading actor, in the role of an amiable old physician, was in the midst of an emergency operation. His brow was knit in concern and high purpose, as the young nurse opposite watched his face for a sign.

"Dr. Lawrence," she said, "do you... do you think you can save Dr. Chester's son?"

Without relaxing his features the Doctor smiled, a bit grimly it seemed, before raising his serious brown eyes to her own.

"I'm afraid it isn't a question of saving *him*, Miss Nurse—I only wish it were—it's a question of saving my dinner."

The nurse evidenced a questioning look, just concealing the panic beneath it *(for he had missed his cue!)* so, laying aside his instruments, he continued, as in explanation:

"Yes, you see, I really think if I speak one more line of this drivel I'll lose my dinner." He nodded gravely at the table, "... vomit right into that incision I've made." He slowly drew off his rubber gloves, regarding the astonished nurse as he did with mild indignation.

"Perhaps that would be *your* idea of a pleasant Sunday evening, Miss Nurse," he said reproachingly, "... sorry, it *isn't* mine!" And he turned and marched off the set.

By the third time something like this happened, the producer and sponsor were very nearly out of their minds. Of course they suspected that a rival company was tampering

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with the productions, bribing the actors and so on. Security measures were taken, directors were fired one after the other, rehearsals were held behind locked doors, and there was an attempt to keep the actors under constant surveillance. But Grand always seemed to get in there somehow with the old convincer.

In the aftermath, some of the actors paid the breach-of-contract fine of twenty-five or fifty thousand; others pleaded temporary insanity; still others gained a lot of publicity by taking a philosophic stand, saying that it was true they had been overcome with nausea at such drivel, that they themselves were too sensitive and serious for it, had too much integrity, moral fiber, etc. With a million behind them, none seemed to lack adequate defense arrangements. Those who were kicked out of their union usually became producers.

Meanwhile the show went on. People started tuning in to see what new outrage would happen; it even appeared to have a sort of elusive comic appeal. It became the talk of the industry, scandalously so. And the rating soared—but somehow it looked bad. Finally the bewildered producer and sponsor were put on the carpet before Mr. Harlan, the tall and distinguished head of the network.

"Listen," he said to the sponsor as he paced about the spacious office, "we want your business, Mr. Levet, don't get me wrong—but if your guys can't control that show of yours.. well, I mean *goddamn* it, what's going on over there?!?" He turned to the producer now, who was a personal friend of his. "... for Christ's sake, Max, can't you get together a *show*, and put it on the way it's supposed to be without any somersaults... is *that* so hard to do?... I mean *we* can't have this sort of thing going on, *you* know that, Max, we *simply cannot have...*"

"Listen, Al," said the producer, a short fat man who rose up and down on his toes, smiling, as he spoke, "we got the highest trendex in the books right now."

"Max, goddamn it, I'd have the *FCC* down on my neck in another week—*you* can't schedule one kind of hour, have something go haywire everytime and fill out with something

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else... I mean what the *hell* have you got over there, *two* shows or *one* for Christ's sake!"

"We got the top trendex in the biz, Al," said the producer, who was having to think very fast now.

"Hell yes, you'd have the top trendex if you put some hot broad up there pulling her snatch open too—but there are some goddamn things that are against the law, Max, and that kind of stuff you had going out last week, that '*I pity the moron whose life is so empty he would look at this*,' and that kind of crap *cannot go out over the air!* Don't you understand that? It's not *me*, Max, you know that. I wouldn't give a good goddamn if you had a... a *mule* up there throwing it to some hot broad, I only wish we could for Christ's sake—but there *is a question of lawful procedure*, and..."

"How about if it's 'healthy satire of the media,' Al?"

"...and ... *what?*"

"We got the top of the book, Al."

"Wait a minute..."

"We got it, Al."

"Wait a minute, Max, I'm thinking for Christ's sake... 'healthy satire of the media'... *It's* an angle, Max, it's an angle. Jones might buy it... Jones at the FCC... if I could get to Jones first... he's stupid enough to buy it. Okay, it's an angle, Max—that's all I can say right now... it's an angle."

The critics for the most part, after lambasting the first couple of shows as "terrific boners," sat tight for a while, just to see which way the wind was going to blow, so to speak—then, with the rating at a sky-rocket height, they began to suggest that it might be worth a peek.

"An off-beat sleeper," one of them said, "don't miss it!"

"*New* comedy," said a second, "a sophisticated take-off on the sentimental!"

And another: "Here's humor at its highest!"

All agreed in the end that it was healthy satire.

After interfering with six or seven shows, Grand grew restive. "I'm pulling out," he said to himself, "it may have been good money after bad all along."

It was just as well perhaps, because at the point when the

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producer and sponsor became aware of what was responsible for their vast audience, they began consciously trying to shape each drama toward that moment of anomaly which had made the show famous. And somehow this seemed to spoil it. At any rate it very soon degenerated—back to the same old tripe—and, of course, it was soon back to the old rating as well... which, as in the early, pre-Grand days, was all right, but nothing really to be too proud of...

"*Guy*..." Agnes Edwards began, turning her cup in her hand and forcing one of the warm playful frowns used by the extremely rich to show a degree of seriousness felt.

"Yes, Aunt Agnes," said Guy, unnecessarily, even brightly, actually coming forward a bit on his chair, not turning his own cup, but fingering it, politely nervous.

"Guy... I've *asked* Ginger Horton for today," she said, giving her nephew a clever look, "and, well, I'm *hoping* you'll ask her to stay on for dinner!"

Ginger Horton was one of several women his aunts pretended to force on Guy; he hadn't seen much of her though since recommending her to his personal dentist, Dr. William Thorndike.

"Sounds like fun," said Guy with a pleasant smile...

Grand made quite a splash in the spring of '57 when he entered the "big-car" field with his sports-line of *Black Devil Rockets*, a gigantic convertible. There were four models of the *Rocket*, each with a different fanciful name, though, except for the color combination of the upholstery, all four cars were identical. The big convertible was scaled in the same proportions of an ordinary automobile, but was tremendous in size—was, in fact, *longer and wider than the largest Greyhound Bus in operation.*

"*There's Power To Spare Under This Big Baby's Forty-Foot Hood!*" was a sales claim that gained attention.

Fronting the glittering crystal dash were two "racing-cup"

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seats with a distance of ten feet between them—and the big "Gang's-All-Here" seat in back would accommodate twelve varsity crewmen abreast in roomy comfort.

"Buy Yourself One *Whale* Of A Car, Buddy!" read the giant ads. "From Stem To Stern She's A Flat One-Hundred Feet, Buddy! Lady-Like Lines On A He-Man Hunk Of Car!"

Performance-figures were generally glossed over, but a number of 3-color billboards and full-page ads were headed: "*Performance?* Ask the Fella Behind the Wheel!" and featured, in apparently authentic testimonal, one of the Indianapolis speed kings behind the wheel of the mammouth convertible. A larger than average man, he was incredibly dwarfed by the colossal dimensions of the car. His tiny face, just visible at the top of the wheel, was split in a grin of insanity, like a tooth-paste ad, a madman's laugh frozen at the nightmare peak of hilarity, and it was captioned:

"*Getting the feel of this big baby has been one real thrill, believe you me!*"

The four identical models were shown at a display room on 5th Avenue, and though considered to be out of the price-range of most people, were evidently sold. At any rate, on the last day of the exposition, they were driven away, out and into the streets of midtown Manhattan during the five o'clock rush.

Despite their roominess, power, and road-holding potential, the big cars proved wholly impractical in the city because their turning-arc—for the ordinary 90-degree change of direction—was greater than the distance between the street-angled buildings, so that by 5:30 all four of the sleek *Devil Rockets* were wedged at angles across various intersections around Columbus Circle, each a barrier to thoroughfare in four directions, and causing quite a snarl indeed until cranes and derricks could be brought up from the East River to pry the big cars out.

City authorities were quick to respond to the flood of protests and got an injunction to prevent Black Devil Rocket Corp. from further production.

"Personally," said one high-ranking city official, in an off-

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the-record remark in defense of the court's ruling—which was, after all, a rather flagrant infringement on the rights of free enterprise—"... *personally*, speaking for myself, I frankly think the car is an ugly car and a... a *pretentious* car, and, as experience has shown us, it is an *impractical* car. I'll bet it's plenty expensive to run, too."

At last account though, Grand—himself fairly well in the background—was carrying on, pressing his fight to get the go-ahead and swing into full production with the big baby...

At that moment the maid stepped inside the door to announce the arrival of Mrs. Ginger Horton and was almost bowled over by an extremely fat lady, who entered the room wearing an enormous Trapeze sun-suit and carrying a Pekinese.

"*Guy!*" she cried, extending her hand as he, rising, came forward, "how *too* good to see you*!*"

"Say 'Hello' to *Guy*, my Bitsy!" she shrieked gaily to the dog, pointing him at Guy and the others, "... say 'Hello' to everybody. There's Agnes and Esther, *see* them, Bitsy?"

The dog yapped crossly instead, and ran at the nose.

"*Is* Bitsy-witsy sicky?" cooed Mrs. Horton, pouting now as she allowed Guy to slowly escort her towards a chair near the others, he manoeuvering her across the room like a gigantic river-scow.

"Hmm? Is my Bitsy sicky-wicky?"

"Nothing too serious, I hope," said Grand with a solicitous frown.

"Just nerves I expect!" said Mrs. Horton, turning arch now and fairly snapping. "The weather is just so... *really abominable*, and then all the nasty little people about... Now here's your Agnes and Esther, Bitsy!"

"How very nice to see you, my dear," said the two elderly women, each laying thin fingers on her immense hand. "What an adorable little sun-suit! It *was* kind of you to bring your Bitsy—wasn't it, Guy?"

"It was extremely kind," said Guy, beaming as he retreated to his own great chair near the window...

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Grand had upset the equilibrium of a rather posh Madison Avenue advertising agency, *Johnathan Reynolds, Ltd.*, by secretly buying it, *en passant* so to speak, and putting in as president a pygmy.

At that time it was rare for a person of this skin-pigmentation or stature—much the less both—to hold down a top-power post in one of these swank agencies, and these two handicaps alone would have been difficult enough to overcome though perhaps *could* have been overcome in due time had the chap shown a reasonable amount of *savoir-faire* and general ability, or the promise of developing it. In this case however, Grand had apparently paid the man to behave in an eccentric manner—to scurry about the offices like a squirrel and to chatter raucously in his native tongue. It was more than a nuisance.

An account-executive, for example, might be entertaining an extremely important client in his own office, a little tête-à-tête of the very first seriousness—perhaps with an emissary of one of the soapflake-kings—when the door would burst open and in would fly the president, scrambling across the room and under the desk, shrieking pure gibberish, and then out he'd go again, scuttling crabwise over the carpet, teeth and eyes blazing.

"What in God's name was that?" the client would ask, looking slowly about, his face pocked with a terrible frown.

"Why, that... that..." but the *a.e.* could not bring himself to tell, not after the first few times anyway. Evidently it was a matter of pride.

Later this *a.e.* might run into one of his friends from another agency, and the friend would greet him:

"Say, hear you've got a new number-one over at J.R., Tommy—what's the chap like?"

"Well, as a matter of fact, Bert..."

"You don't mean the old boy's got you on the *mat* already, Tommy? Ha-ha. *That* what you're trying to say?"

"No, Bert, it's... well, I don't know, Bert, *I just don't know.*"

It was a matter of pride, of course. As against it, salaries had been given a fairly stiff boost, *and* titles. If these dapper exec's

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were to go to another agency now, it would be to a considerable loss of dollars and cents. Most of the old timers—and the newer ones too, actually —had what it took to stick it out there at J.R....

"Anyone have any news of Bill Thorndike, by the way?" he added matter of factly, as he sat down again.

Ginger Horton banged her cup irately.

"That... that damn *nut!*" she said, her cheeks puffing out like a great red frog's. "No, and I couldn't care less!"

"*Who?*" asked Esther.

"Dr. William Thorndike," said Agnes, "that extraordinary dentist whom Ginger went to. He and Guy were friends at school together—isn't that right, Guy?"

"Yes, quite good friends too," said Guy. "Poor fellow, had a nervous breakdown or something from what Ginger says. I haven't seen him in the longest. How was he when you last saw him, Ginger?"

Grand had made this inquiry any number of times, and then had always glossed over Ginger's account of the incident, as though he could not fully take it in.

"The *last* time!?!" she cried, "why I only saw him once, of course—on *your* recommendation—and once too often it was too! Good Lord, don't tell me you've forgotten *that* again? Why he was absolutely insane! He said to me: 'These molars are *soft*, Mrs. Horton!' or some such ridiculous thing. '*We'd* better get you onto a a soft-food regime right away!' he said, and then, without another word about it, while I was still leaning back with my mouth open, he dropped a *raw egg* into my mouth and rushed out of the room, waving his arms and yelling at the top of his voice! Raving mad!"

"Hmm—not like Bill Thorndike," said Grand. "First rate medical-man, he used to be. You never went back to him then?"

"*I certainly did not!* I went straight to the nearest police-station, that's where I went. And reported him!"

Grand frowned a look of mild disapproval.

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"I'm afraid that won't help Bill's standing with the Association any."

"Well, I should hope *not!*" said Ginger Horton as strongly as she could.

"How Uncle Edward used to love raw eggs!" said Esther "Do you remember, Agnes?"

"It's hardly the same thing, Esther," said Agnes.

"Well, he always had them with a sort of *sauce*," Esther recalled. "Worstershire sauce, I suppose it was."

"It *could* have been some new form of deficiency treatment, of course, Ginger," Agnes said... "I mean if your molars *were* soft..." but in the face of Ginger Horton's mounting exasperation, she broke off and turned to Guy, "... but what's *your* feeling on it, Guy?"

"Bill always *was* up-to-the-minute," Guy agreed. "Always on to the latest. Very progressive in school affairs, that sort of thing—oh nothing disreputable, of course, but, I mean to say as far as being on to the newest thing in ... in dentistry-techniques, well, I'm certainly confident that Bill—"

"He just plopped that raw egg right into my mouth!" said Ginger shrilly. "Why I didn't even know what it was. And that isn't all—the instruments, and *everything* else were crazy. There was some kind of wooden-paddle..."

"Spatula?" prompted Guy helpfully.

"No, *not* a spatula! Good Heavens! A big wooden oar, about four-feet long, actually leaning up against the chair."

"Surely he didn't use that?" said Agnes.

"But what on earth was it *doing* there is what I want to know?" demanded Ginger.

"Maybe Bill's taken up boating," Guy offered, but then coughed to show the lameness of it, "... wasn't too keen though at school as I remember. *Tennis*, that was Bill's game —damn good he was too—on the varsity his last two years."

"I simply *cannot* make you understand what an absolute madman he was," said Ginger Horton. "There was something else on the chair, too—a pair of *ice-tongs* it looked like!"

"Clamp, I suppose," murmured Grand.

"'*Better safe than sorry, eh Mrs. Horton?*' he said to me like

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a perfect maniac, and then he said: 'Now I *don't* want you to swallow this!' and he dropped a *raw egg* in my mouth and rushed around the room, waving a lot of those weird instruments over his head, and then out the door, *yelling at the top of his lungs!*"

"May have been called out on emergency, you see," said Guy, "happens all too often in that business from what I've seen of it."

"What *was* he saying when he left, Ginger?" Agnes asked.

"*Saying?* He wasn't *saying* anything. He was simply yelling. '*Yaahh! Yaahh! Yaahh!*' it sounded like."

"How extraordinary," said Agnes.

"*What* was he saying?" Esther asked of Agnes.

"'Yaahh Yaahh'" said Agnes quietly.

"Not like Bill," said Guy, shaking his head, "must have been called out on emergency, only thing I can make of it."

"But surely the receptionist could have explained it all, my dear," said Agnes.

"There was *no* receptionist I tell you!" said Ginger Horton irately. "There was no one but *him*—and a lot of fantastic instruments. And the chair was odd too! I'm lucky to have gotten out of there alive!"

"Did she swallow the egg?" asked Esther.

"Esther, for Heavens's sake!"

"What was that?" asked Grand, who seemed not to have heard.

"Esther wanted to know if Ginger had *swallowed* the egg," Agnes said.

"Certainly not!" said Ginger, "I spat it right out! Not at first, of course; I was in a state of complete shock. 'I *don't* want you to swallow this!' he said when he dropped it in, the maniac, so I just sat there in a state of pure shock while he raced around the room, screaming like a madman!"

"Maybe it wasn't an egg," suggested Esther.

"What on earth do you mean?" demanded Ginger, quite beside herself. "It certainly *was* an egg—a raw egg! I *tasted* it and *saw* it, and some of the yellow got on my frock!"

"And then you filed a complaint with the authorities?"

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asked Agnes.

"Good Heavens, Agnes, I went straight to the police. Well, he could not be found! Disappeared without a trace. Raving mad!"

"Bill Thorndike's no fool," said Grand loyally, "I'd stake my word on that."

"But *why* did he disappear like that, Guy?" asked Agnes.

"May have moved his offices to another part of the city, you see," Guy explained, "*or* out of the city altogether. I know Bill was awfully keen for the West Coast, as a matter of fact—couldn't get enough of California! Went out there every chance he could."

"No," said Ginger Horton with considerable authority, "he is not *anywhere* in this country. There is absolutely no trace of him."

"Don't tell me Bill's chucked the whole thing," said Grand reflectively, "given it all up and gone off to Bermuda or somewhere." He gave a soft tolerant chuckle. "Wouldn't surprise me too much though at that. I know Bill was fond of *fishing* too, come to think of it. Yes, fishing and tennis—that was Bill Thorndike all right. As a matter of fact," getting out of his big chair again, "I'll have to be pushing along myself, I'm afraid."

"Guy, I simply will *not* hear of it," cried cross Agnes, snatching her glasses off her nose and fixing the man with a terrible frown. "Surely you *shall* stay for dinner!"

"Guy, Guy, Guy," keened Esther, wagging her dear gray head, "always on the go."

"Yes, only wish I *could* stay," agreed Guy sadly. "Best push on though. Back to harness, back to grind."

"But you just cannot go off like that, Guy," said Agnes, truly impatient with the boy now, "surely you won't!"

"*Can* and *must*, my dears," he explained, kissing them both. "Flux, motion, growth, change—these are your great life-principles. Best keep pace while we can."

He bent forward and took fat Ginger's hand in his own. "Yes, I'll be moving on, Ginger," he said with a warm smile for her, expansive now, perhaps in anticipation, "pushing

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down to Canaveral and out Los Alamos way!"

"Good Heavens," said Agnes, "in this dreadful heat? How silly!"

"Always on the go," purred Esther.

"It's wise to keep abreast," said Guy seriously, "I'll just nip down to Canaveral and see what's shaking on the space-scene, so to speak."

"*Guy*," said Ginger, squeezing his hand and sparkling up again on one monstrous surge of personality, "it *has* been fun!" Good-byes were her forte.

Guy gave a courtly nod, before turning to go, in deference it seemed to her great beauty.

"As ever, my dear," he whispered, and with a huskiness that made all the ladies tingle, "it has been... *inspiring*."

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Poems
by Geoffrey Hill

CANTICLE FOR GOOD FRIDAY

The cross staggered him. At the cliff-top
Thomas, beneath its burden, stood
While the dulled wood
Spat on the stones each drop
Of deliberate blood.

A clamping, cold-figured day
Thomas (not transfigured) stamped, crouched,
Watched
Smelt vinegar and blood. He,
As yet unsearched, unscratched,

And suffered to remain
At such near distance—
(A slight miracle might cleanse
His brain
Of all attachments, claw-roots of sense)—

In unaccountable darkness moved away,
The strange flesh untouched, carrion sustenance
Of staunchest love, choicest defiance,
Creation's issue congealing (and one woman's).

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TWO FORMAL ELEGIES

(For the Jews in Europe)

I

Knowing the dead, and how some are disposed,
Subdued under rubble, water, sand-graves,
In clenched cinders, not yielding their abused
Bodies and bonds to those whom war's chance saves
Without the law, we grasp, roughly, the song.
Arrogant acceptance from which song derives
Is bedded with their blood, makes flourish young
Roots in ashes. The wilderness revives,

Deceives with sweetness harshness. Still beneath
Live skin stone breathes, about which fires but play,
Fierce heart that is the iced brain's to command
To judgment (studied reflex; contained breath;)—
Their best of worlds since, on the ordained day,
This world went spinning from Jehovah's hand.

II

For all that must be gone through, their long death
Documented and safe, we have enough
Witnesses (our world being witness-proof).
The sea flickers, roars, in its wide hearth.
Here, yearly, the pushing midlanders stand
To warm themselves; men brawny with life,
Women who expect life. They relieve
Their thickening bodies, settle on scraped sand.

Is it good to remind them, on a brief screen,
Of what they have witnessed and not seen?
(Deaths of the city that persistently dies...?)
(To put up stones ensures some sacrifice.)
(Sufficient men confer, carry their weight.)
(At whose door does the sacrifice stand or start?)

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THE GUARDIANS

The young, having risen early, had gone,
Some, with excursions, beyond the bay-mouth,
Some toward lakes, a fragile reflected sun.
Thunder-heads drift, awkwardly, from the south;

The old watch them. They have watched the safe
Packed harbors topple under sudden gales,
Great tides erupt, yachts burn at the wharf
That on clean seas pitched their effective sails.

There are silences. These, too, they endure:
Soft comings-on; soft after-shocks of calm.
Quietly they wade the disturbed shore;
Gather the dead as the first dead scrape home.

REQUIEM FOR PLANTAGENET KINGS

For whom the possessed sea littered on both shores
Ruinous arms; being fired, and for good,
To sound the constitution of just wars
Men, in their eloquent fashion, understood.

Relieved of soul, the dropping-back of dust,
Their pride's usage admitted within doors,
At home under caved chantries, locked in trust,
With well-dressed alabaster and proved spurs
They lie; they lie; secure in the decay
Of blood, blood-marks, crowns hacked and coveted,
Before the scouring flames of trial-day
Alight on men; before sleeked groin, gored head,
Budge through the clay and gravel, and the sea
Across daubed rock evacuates its dead.

—GEOFFREY HILL

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L'AURORE GRELOTTANTE

Three countries blacken and vanish,
rivers run unlighted and silent,
lamp by lamp of the city came, went,
into the utter dark, which was my wish.

In my scarred thought this city
burns to a ruin under the visiting air,
among the ashes of whose luxury
the young barbarians shake their scented hair.

Bitterer, deeper, in my desolate thought,
a lonely and a self-murdering love,
uninhabitable ashes, every dove
murdered, every winged buzzard caught.

The wind rises. At this time of night
condemned men lie quiet on their beds.
Birds start. Vagueness clears to light.
The wakeful old can let fall their heads.

The wind rises. A workman coughs in the cold.
It rises. Volleys and line of mist
push from river to river and find no hold.
Leaves fall, and blood runs cold in the wrist.

—PETER LEVI, S. J.

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THE DEAD'S LOCALE

(For Adele Ruth Meyer)

tu boca ya sin luz para mi muerte

1.

It seems no air or any other thing
Pretends to help; and you, defeated now.
But visibilities, your balm and clue,
Never demanded their affection bring
A gift, heart's virtue climbing from a bow
Where shadow hid its portent. Still, I knew,

Girls plead for husbands as their husbands do
And not a drop you used, when light had gone,
Could stir that fading blood, that eerie beat,
Deposed and lost among the nights. We flew,
But lovers wait where summer is a faun
Whose colors are the color of retreat.

Next year, I think, the sea will be my home,
For on that tattered slam of blue-green foam
Monotony and beauty rest my view,
Uncluttered, clean, cold in the breaker's roar
And there, to kill all memory of you:
Now function, heart, forget this lover's chore.

2.

How many times night gave Diana back
Its rough cumber, I cannot say, but now
She seems abandoned by the dark career,
And all those hounds have died along their track.
Even Orion wields a fading sword
And falls, unmitigated, after fear.

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And still, no world of mine is permanence,
No stern and perfect orbit unconcludes
Or sketches twilight long enough; and sense
Is each abstraction I can squeeze to blocks.
What sings to me cries from that precious dust,
Whose motes break dreaming their immortal trust.

Now,— comprehensive, impious mouth on all,—
Those damned evenings nearing you and warm
Will stay, and winter, building in my skull,
Utter its last, cold blossom at our pall;
Deprive these hearts, veiled in their withering blood,
Whose hive was once the body and the swarm.

—STEPHEN BERG

DAILY

Sparrows disappear
As the shape of a wing is recognized;
The front door, walked to
On blue oil,
Hinges at the bottom;
Gasoline hoses wave a heavy hand;
The sky shatters like a blue shell;
Veins from the back of the right hand pull free,
And float in the air, a tree of dead blood;
And there is, suddenly, one more step
At the bottom of the stairs.

—ROBERT DAVIS

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de Kooning

The Eastern Long Island Painters

Artists, having an affinity for one another, tend to gather in colonies where they can love and hate each other most conveniently. The location of the colony, as on Eastern Long Island, is often as paradoxical as its component parts.

Here, a group of avant-garde painters has chosen to work and live in the very core of conservative territory—the towns of East Hampton, Southampton, and their environs. In these socially formidable summer resorts artists rent, buy and build houses where they can work. They are aware of cashmere-sweatered golfers putting nearby, but they ignore them. The golfers, in turn, sense that something suspicious is being done with paint right down the road, and putt on. It is an uneasy juxtaposition, with very little contact and hardly anything in common—it might almost be a mutual re-affirmation society based on contrast One can't help wondering why the painters come here where even the rents give pause Perhaps they

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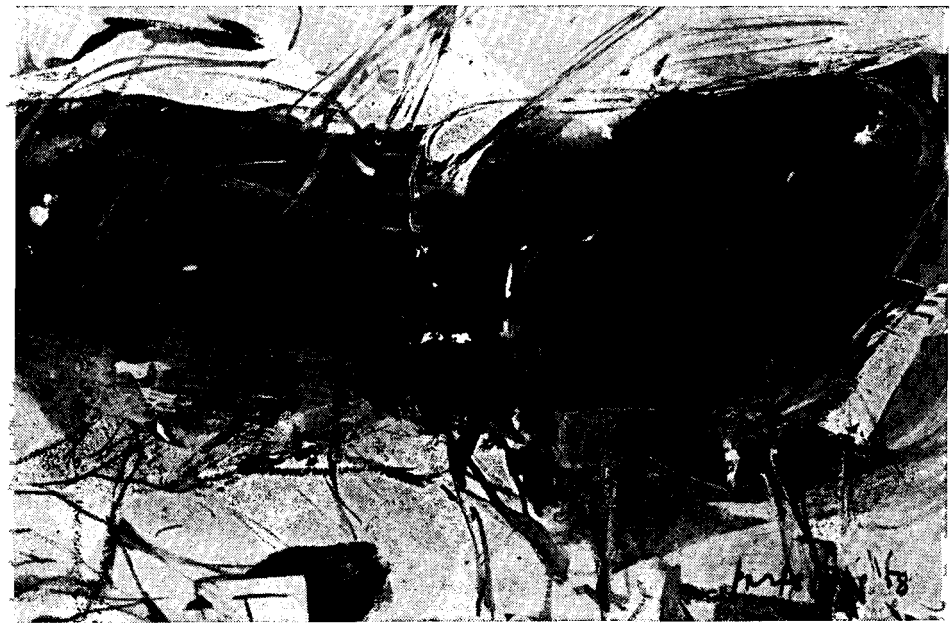
return each summer because Jackson Pollock and Robert Motherwell came twelve years ago. Or maybe it is just that Eastern Long Island is remarkably beautiful.

The country is open—potato fields and pastures, lengths of dune and ocean, wastes of scrub oak. The automobile has achieved a local eminence, but not simply as a means of transportation. Here it is judged by more esthetic standards. The artists, like the chauffeured, operate tall vehicles bizarre as Casper Milktoast's, or roar about in slinky European racing models. In some cases the artist has so failed to consider the actual mobility of his car that, charming though it is, it breaks down continually. There is no real cause for alarm, however, because any other artist is immediately available for consultation. Or almost any golfer, for that matter. But community spirit ends with the closing of the hood.

Most of the painters have settled in Springs or Three Mile Harbor, small communities outside East Hampton—on the wrong side of the tracks, some might say. An early farm house, leaning in its silvery frame, is carpetless inside and airy as a gallery. In its bare, vaguely furnished interior hang a few canvases which should he notice the name on the mailbox outside, would make a passing collector's heart pound. The barn behind the house, stripped to make a studio, is skylighted. Nearby zinnias and dahlias thrive



Fine

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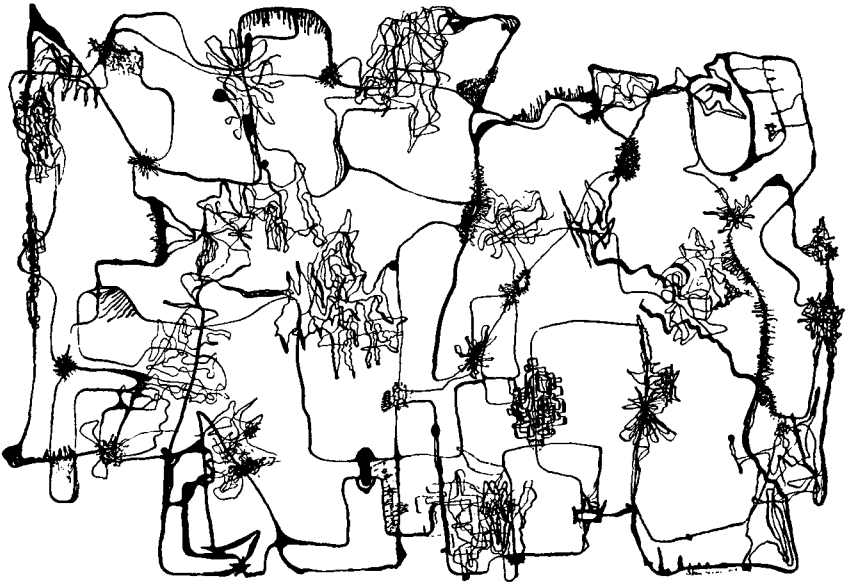

Lassaw

beside a gourmet's plot of vegetables and herbs. The parked tricycle, the fishing rods, the fearsome dog, the cats—all the accoutrements of home in the old sense of home—are here, and perhaps a baseball diamond in the field beyond. This artist has settled down. He loves his house and uses his land. He mows his lawn, can repair his water pump. One painter tends a vineyard, pressing his own wine in the fall.

Farther down the road, opposite the graveyard where Jackson Pollock lies buried at the base of a tremendous boulder, the scene is different. In a patch of stubble is a shingled cottage before which five or six of the more curious cars are drawn up. The planting around the house is sparse—a bull briar, hardiest of the local weeds, is doing badly. Facing the road are placed a camp chair and a kitchen chair, weathered and remote, decorated with a disturbing number of athletic supporters.

The living room is obscured at first by smoke and people. Then the largest piece of furniture becomes discernible. It is an upright white piano covered with a plastic cloth. It, the two adjacent walls and most of the ceiling, are as violently splattered with paint as any canvas. Paint has trickled down the window panes and dried, letting a little light filter in through trails of red and purple and green—an effect of runny stained

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glass. The floor is just as colorful, touched here and there by the chilly blue of a crumpled package of Gauloises *cigarettes. High as the room, the painting which caused all the trouble looms up darkly in the corner.*

The kitchen, too, is a riot of paint. Huge canvases jut out from behind the ice-box, obscuring the herb shelf entirely. The kitchen table has been converted into a palette—heaping portions of egg and ketchup shades, and a deep Bœuf Bourguignon brown. Beyond, in a little dining alcove, an utterly dead sunflower lies face up on the table. Someone uses it for an ash tray.

This house two of the younger painters have rented for the summer. Their landlord, after they left, carefully masked off a square of the living room wall before repainting. Now he has, forever by the piano, an original work to remember them by.

If you proceed through town to what might be called the right side of the tracks, the painter chez lui *changes with the real estate. A long driveway leads him to a residence which would have tempted Gatsby. It is built of stucco, Anglo-Spanish style, graced in front by lawns and lily gardens, in back by a wide flight of stone stairs leading down to the expansive waters of Georgica Pond. Carpets have been strewn about the terraces for the comfort of cocktail guests, who can sip at sunset and observe the swans below. His*

Park

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Bluhm

snow-white poodle and his angora cat saunter through the bleeding-heart and rattle the rhododendron leaves. At a little distance, in a giant oak-paneled studio, this artist works. Above him, on a balcony, hangs an impressive collection of Art Brut. The house itself contains many more fine pieces—a music room of Stills, a hall of Pollocks, a landing lined with Dubuffets, all alarming and immense. Beyond, in the boat house, another painter works, and in the gate house still another. – There are, in addition, two more studios on the estate.

This disparate collection of painters all show their work in a gallery in East Hampton organized by three of them. They appropriated a defunct market, painted it white, installed floodlights. They blackened the windows, shutting out entirely the genteel light of Main Street. Outside stand the elm trees and historic homes, lovingly maintained by the Ladies Village Improvement Society. Inside is the world of the artists' vision—vibrant, disquieting. Very few of the golfers venture in to see it.

Patsy Southgate

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Little

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Brooks

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Schapiro

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Carone

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Rivers

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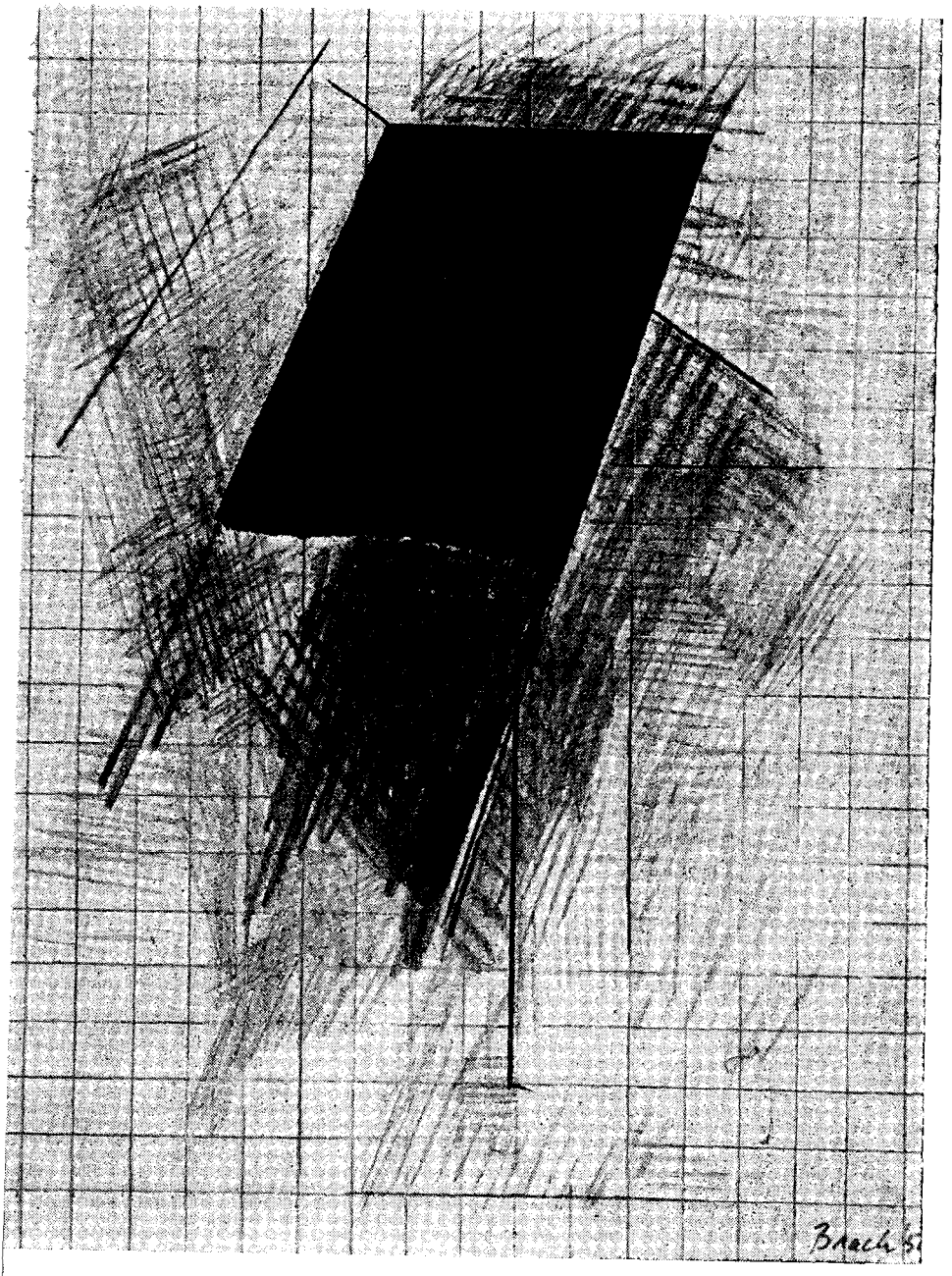

Brach

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Goldberg

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Budd

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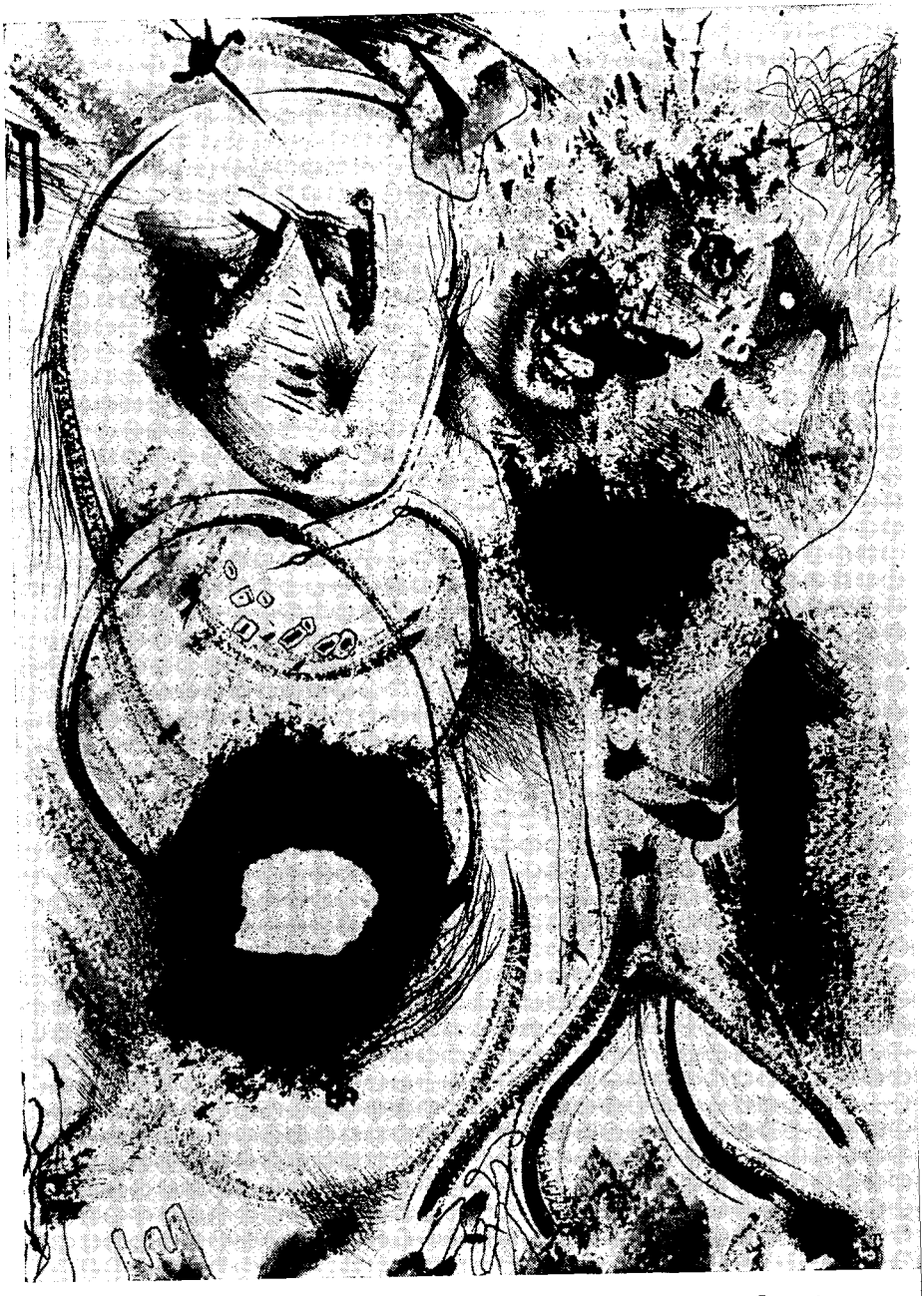

Ossorio

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Krasner

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Downs

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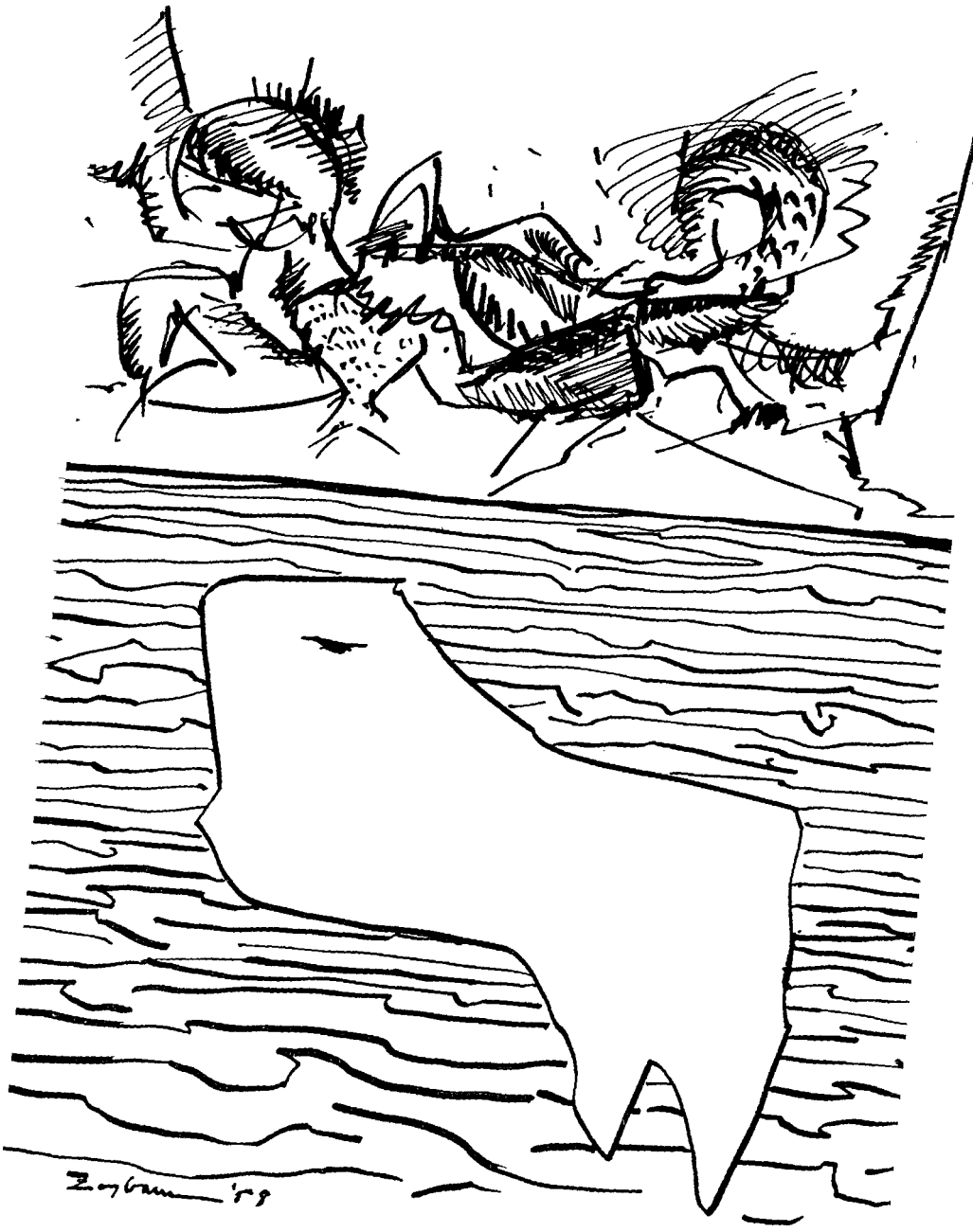

Zogbaum

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CHATEAU DE VILLANDRY

Before the opening of the wrought-iron gates,
The gravel walks receive in daily dawns
Reindentation to fresh herring-bone
Patterns, and hoses splutter on the lawns;

And later, from successive terraces
Safely at one remove, the tourists crane
Down on the faultless Jardin de l'Amour,
Rightly so famous, as the guides explain;

But we, beneath the aegis of our host
Skirted the areas where footmarks might show,
To where hired hands had fresh the night before
Reclipped the appropriate symbols of the low

Square-cut box hedges. Just the place, it seemed,
For Twelfth Night acted in Third Empire dress;
Recall then how, by Louis Seize's court,
A masque too close to life, if one may guess,

Was here enacted; how the enclosures served
To set a mood or give a nimble clue
For a proposal quarter meant at best.
The hunting-boot and crinoline retinue

Played the game well; and if some rebel soul
Painted the trellis scarlet, threw champagne
And glasses down long avenues in disgust,
Merely he was not asked to come again.

That gentry thought it knew and had the best
In life—its etiquette, its games, its talk,
The critic spouting from his meagre page,
The minor Watteau who sketched guests in chalk;

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And yet those calf-high hedges brought a worse
  Stifling of sense than maze or catacomb,
Offered of less escape than Chinon's keep.
  Nightly at dusk they prop the withering bloom.

—MARK ROSKILL

CALIFORNIA LANDSCAPE

Several eras have come to a close
In this land of extremes. In our own day
We visit the slow process of decay
As it moves in the sun to decompose

The period estate. Formal gardens
Suggest vague symmetries in underbrush;
Statuary surprises with a rush
Of naked whiteness. The thicket hardens.

Some say the house is late Florentine.
There are tarnished griffins atop the gate.
And somewhere the vision of temperate
Luxury indigenous to the scene

And to this land of incongruities.
We are haunted by the old suggestion
Of somewhere immutable perfection
And by broken palms and ancient cities.

—ROBERT GREENWOOD

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THE CHARMS OF CIRCE

She shapes the moral traveller
A sphere where she is in command,
And on a lower level her
Rotund endowments make him stand
In circumspective paradise
As with an apodeictic hand
She leads him to the precipice;
The way her lines of force are bent
Provokes the root of his surprise,
"I did not know what danger meant
Till I was safe. Will you, again,
Roll 'round the mills of my content?"

Indulgently as mother then
The authoress of How to Please
A While the Best and Beast in Men
Presents her bland kinetic frieze;
For visual the appetite,
And sensual the locks and keys.
A thousand burglaries by night,
The fear, as well, of armed assault,
Prompts her to keep her treasure tight,
At home with heart in heaven's vault;
But other than this stinginess
She has no fleshly flaw or fault.

The body in extreme undress
Is one more geometric shape
In one more world and, more or less,
From world or flesh is no escape.
Necessity alone inheres
In all that's measured by the tape,
While freedom blesses what appears.
Between illusion and the fact,
Unsure of each, the pilot steers

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Till all her charms like snails retract
And she spins on, mechanical.
So winning is the doubtful act

That mariners for ever shall
In any strait remember her:
'O pivot of the ethical,
Though promise of salvation were
A premise of arithmetic,
Yet infinitely you recur,
And none to help us is so quick.
Protectress of the unastute,
Repeat your resurrective trick:
Persuade the little more than brute,
Unridden by the caviller,
To fasten on the absolute.'

—DARYL HINE

"MORNING BEACH," ACAPULCO

A Coney Island of Las Vegas styles,
Caleta lies all Danae to the sun;
Naked as greed, careless of voyeur smiles...
She is the anyone for everyone.

Bronzed blondes in green bikinis, trim brunettes,
Lana and Gina, langorous with grog,
Honor the sun. Ah me, when a girl sweats
Down here, male bodies whimper like a dog!

What do you think, old boy? Are you the god
Who'll take Caleta fiercely as the sun?
Pony up pesos! Sizzle the dumb broad!...
She is the everyone for anyone.

—W. G. VAN KEUREN

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—*Woodcut by Peter Larson*

Georgia McKinley

THE CRIME

SOME Saturdays the two white men did not hunt, but would sit nearly motionless on the front porch of the little lodge, with the bourbon and the bucket of ice cubes between them on the floor, staring somberly off toward the rows of houses which had crept out from the city to menace their land. On such days they were short-tempered and mean as old dogs sitting in the sun, snapping at each other and at Leroy, the Negro whom they always brought with them to carry and clean the game.

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Leroy had gone on these excursions for so long that in some ways he knew the men better than anyone else did, including their wives, and he could predict what their mood would be from the moment they picked him up in town. This winter noon the very blast of their horn in the street outside alarmed him. He had just sat down in the kitchen to eat a plate of grits and bacon fat for lunch, when, too soon and too loud, the deep note rolled through his daughter's flimsy little house as though to level it. Leroy rose straight up from the table, propelled on the sound. "They here!" he said, his hands fluttering before him in quieting motions. "Oh lord, oh shush," he muttered, but again the horn called.

Of course everyone in the house, everyone in the neighborhood had heard. His daughter, with whom he lived, now appeared in the doorway. "Well, you friends is here again, Poppa," she said, her voice buttery and rich with sarcasm. "You white friends come to call for you, Poppa, and they seems anxious. Better hurry on—." She planted herself across his path and in spite of the racket outside, held him motionless with her stubborn presence.

"Well, I *hears* 'em," he said, and bending his head sulkily, hoping she didn't mean to start anything, he noticed his own hands hanging limply on the air. The skin of his hands was turning grey with age; once they had been a deep solid brown, but now they looked as if they had been coated with a bluish-white powder which would not come off. He scrubbed them against his shirt and held them up, then looked over at his daughter but she was still there, looking up at him with her twitching, middle-aged face.

"Where you goin', Poppa?" she said.

He stared at her. "I goin' with *them*, of course, and I got to *go*, Irma."

"You goin' with them white men *again?*" she said in a sudden loud voice.

He hung his head. He could never understand Irma, touchy and nervous as she was, always talking anxiously over the telephone about a committee or a meeting. Ever since his wife had died and he had moved in with her, it had been a

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shame for him to do what he had done all his life: to work for whatever white people offered to pay him; to take their old clothes; to go to backdoors for handouts on Christmas and Easter and Thanksgiving and to go with the two men outside whenever and wherever they wanted.

"I not gonna have 'em come down here no *mo*'," she said. "Roaring in down here in they big car honking and hollering. My neighbors is respectable and they don't like it."

"Well, I tell 'em I meet 'em somewheres else," he said in a little, bright voice. It sounded like a child's lie and they both knew it.

"Now I'm thinkin' about *you*, Poppa, ever bit as much as me," she went on warningly.

"Well, don't you ever worry about me, I *always* get along with 'em."

Her face drew in and became smaller and more pointed, marked by deep lines, and her eyes grew sharp at the centers and soft with black tears around the edges. "Self-respeck," she said in a ragged whisper as though the word had lodged in her throat, "I'm talkin' about self-respeck."

"Um-hum," he said affirmatively and stood looking down at her, waiting.

Then she shrugged, sighed, and stepped barely out of his path. "You a white man's nigger," she said to him very gently and without any particular interest as he passed.

The little house was long and narrow as a railroad car and the kitchen was at the far end; he had still to walk the whole length of it and somewhere ahead of him his grandchildren were waiting. Light came in a thin yellow strip through the front door and as he walked toward it, he passed the three children crowded darkly together in the shadows. They let him pass in silence. They were ready to go to the white men's schools when the time should come and too self-involved to notice him.

Outside, he turned uneasily to look back and saw that they were all watching him. The house was so narrow that, seen from the front door, they seemed to be standing close together in one group, and against the brown wallpaper, from

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the yellow crowded dimness of the house, their black faces looked after him, unmoving and touched with sadness.

He lifted his hand in a confused movement of farewell and turned away, then stopped to get himself together: rubbed down his hair, looked at his cracked shoes and wiped them against his pants legs. Under his feet on the dirt path was a pulp of mashed chinaberries from the tree overhead, their thick meal sending up a sweetish smell. He lifted his eyes from this grey and yellow mess to the white men's car. There was the Cadillac, huge and gay in the winter scene of grey leafless trees and grey paintless houses. Amid the crumble and decay of the little yards, between the garbage and mud, the car struck hard and solid against his eyes and shone before him, silver and glistening blue. There was now a deep solemn quiet across the neighborhood as if everyone were waiting in the houses, watching from hiding as he approached the car. In a sudden fever of excitement, he thought, "Someone goan throw a rock," and carefully scraping the chinaberries off his feet, he got into the car.

"Mr. Underwood, Mr. McIntire," he murmured politely, but after all the noise they had made, they were bent above a newspaper open between them and did not seem to notice he had come.

He sank into the back seat, out of sight he hoped, of the people in the houses, but he was still aware of them. He was oddly aware even of what the one among them felt who was going to throw something; the heft of a solid object seemed to run along his own arm. "Come on, please, Mr. Underwood, let's get out of here," he said.

The man at the wheel turned and gave him a sly look. "What's matter, Leroy, your daughter been after you again?" he said, as he started the car.

"Yessuh," Leroy said with a ghostly, high, crackling laugh. It had been the white men's idea, while his wife was alive, that she held a rolling pin over his head, and now his daughter had stepped into her place. This had nothing to do with the truth, just as his crazy cackle was not his real laughter, but both pleased the white men and gave them something to

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talk about. It would never have occurred to him to tell them anything about his daughter that was true: he would have felt it was none of their business. The white men and his daughter were simply *there* for him to deal with from time to time and he was happy and relieved when he was able to do so in such a way as to make one or all of them happy. So now, in the car, the unpleasantness at his daughter's house was past, before him was whatever the afternoon might bring; but now blessedly, there was nothing to think about, nothing to do but wait. He folded his hands drily in his lap and his mind, with a rush, floated free.

When he was a child, he had been hired out in cotton-picking seasons to a family of Negroes who lived in east Texas. The house in which he had stayed stood in the middle of a field with the cotton rows planted up against its walls, so that a child had only to step through the door or roll out a window to be in the field and at work. It was there that he had first learned to snatch any moment when he was not at work for blank rest of mind and body. After so many years and so much hard work, when he was not dealing directly with a tool and a task in hand, he did not think. The higher centers of his brain were still.

Now the winter sun, still high in the sky, was on his side of the car; the glass of the window concentrated the rays to his old, chilled bones. With his head back on the cushions, his nose awoke and found the smell high up in the big car, thin, sour and delicious—beer! The white men had been drinking beer. He breathed in dreamily, warmed by the sun, the white men moving dimly in their own world, thousands of miles away in the front seat.

Mr. McIntire, the little nervous one, kept twisting about, looking out the front, the side window, the back, up, down, anywhere, everywhere, and talking talking. Mr. Underwood sat heavily around the wheel as if grown upon it, his big face flat and vacant from the side, giving nothing. Leroy had gone on hunting trips far and near with them for over thirty years, and although at least half of what they said always lay in his mind unused, a great waste pile of white words, still he had

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his own feelings and lights in which they were clearly reflected.

It was partly because of Mr. Underwood's name, but more because of his nature, that Leroy, almost ever since he had known him, had thought of him as being like a big and solid tree, a hard, rough trunk of a man, never to be moved from the exact place in which he had made his slow and stubborn growth. Mr. McIntire, so happy and careless, had little weight beside him, and merely ran like a squirrel in Mr. Underwood's branches, always looking brightly around and chattering.

Leroy found Mr. McIntire only amusing, and though he almost never listened to his words, he enjoyed hearing him talk. The man spoke in crazy spurts, the speed of his own nervous thoughts straining against his soft and whining southern speech.

"Look at that, look at that," Mr. McIntire was saying, "They're putting up another damned motel there..."

Mr. Underwood did not look aside from the highway but said slowly, "We used to shoot quail there, you remember that?"

But Mr. McIntire was busy at the window. "Now will you look, will you just *look* at that?"

Leroy looked lazily out the window. There where the flat land had lain so long in black plowed fields or empty prairie grasslands (they *had* shot quail here a few times) now there was a whole city of bright little houses, row upon row, acre upon acre, off to the edge of sight.

"Now isn't that a *damnable* shame," Mr. Underwood said suddenly in great bitterness.

They had passed this addition and others like it almost all the way out to the hunting lodge every Saturday now for three or four years—five, six, seven years they had been building out from town in this direction, coming in with bulldozers and piles of bright new wood, and leaving behind them the finished boxes. Still, every time they passed something new had been started or finished and that got on the white men's nerves, but Leroy could not understand why they should seem to be so angry about it now. They were in a bad

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mood about something, he thought, that was for sure. Reluctantly, he roused and gathered himself to pay a little more attention to them.

Fifteen years ago, the men would have laughed at all this, packed up and gone off to wild country. Only ten years ago the three of them had gone to the Grand Tetons and hunted moose above the timberline. Since then, though they had planned many trips, they had never quite made one—there was something a little wrong about Mr. Underwood's heart, Mr. McIntire said he had an ulcer. Still the men had their two hundred acres which they kept stocked with birds and small game, and they had a fine lake full of fish on the property, but the little box houses had almost reached them now, and already the County had cut a highway straight across their land, slicing open the red clay earth with machines and leaving it healed with a wide grey macadam scar. It seemed unlikely that a wild duck would ever land on the lake again and day to day nothing was quite the same as it had been the day before.

Presently Mr. McIntire said wildly, "Look, look at that; now there's their *damned* Zeppelin!"

"Their what?" Mr. Underwood gnawed out.

Mr. McIntire had rolled down the glass and was leaning away out the window. "It said—in the paper—they were going to have a Zeppelin," he yelled over his shoulder. "They'll play searchlights on it tonight."

Leroy looked out too. There in the great blue sky floated the peaceful silver sausage, out just in the direction they were going.

Mr. Underwood spoke in his blank voice. "*Lee*roy."

"Yessuh?" He sat up straight. "Mr. Underwood?"

"They're opening a new supermarket out by the hunting property today. Got the Zeppelin there. You want to go over?"

"You want me git you sumthin'?" he asked carefully.

"Hell no. I mean *you* want to go? They're gonna have a hillybilly band and free corsages for ladies. White and colored invited. It said so in the paper."

Leroy stirred on his bony hips and rubbed his hands with a sound of paper, puzzled that Mr. Underwood should seem

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to be blaming him for the supermarket. "No *suh*, I don't wanna go there," he said quickly "Not to *no* supermarket. Ah gets so lost and bamboozled in them places. Why, I 'member once—." He gave his cracked and crazy laugh but there was no response from the front seat.

"Lots of colored folks be there, Leroy," Mr. Underwood said. "Lots of colored moving into that area."

"Yessuh," he said and rubbed down his grey hair. "I guess so." And then they left him and passed on to other things. There was a Negro settlement building up out there, they said; one big block of the houses you could see from the hunting lodge belonged to Negroes; other solid blocks belonged to white people and they were building at the edges of all the areas so that they grew closer and closer together.

"They'll meet," Mr. Underwood was saying. "Have to come a street with new white houses on one side and new colored houses on the other."

"Boy, I'd hate to be there when that happens," Mr. McIntire said, bouncing around.

"Yeh," said Mr. Underwood. He brooded over the wheel for a few minutes. "Hell, don't kid yourself," he said, "the first thing you know it'll be possible, it'll be *legal*, for some black son of a bitch to move in next door to any of us."

Leroy looked up and saw Mr. Underwood's eyes, a bright clean blue, standing fixed on him in the rear-view mirror.

He dropped his own eyes quickly. In the front seat the white men went on with their jabbering as though nothing had happened, but Leroy sat quietly, his eyes on his folded hands.

He thought of all the years he had gotten along so fine with them—how they had kidded and laughed at and taken care of him. He could get almost anything he wanted from them by telling a long, pitiful story of trouble, or by making himself look so silly with some rambling crazy tale that they would laugh to bust their sides and do whatever he wanted. He thought now with quiet relish of some of these occasions and laughed noiselessly to himself.

But the car had been turned ferociously off the highway and onto the torn and rutted red clay road that led up to the

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hunting lodge and when they had lurched to a stop behind the little house, Mr. Underwood and Mr. McIntire left the car immediately, walked round to the front and stared intently off into the wide sunny distance. For a moment Leroy thought they had gone to look for a duck on the lake below or the rise of a bird, as they had done so often in the past. Then, getting out himself, he saw their eyes were fixed beyond the sweet empty brown slopes and valleys of their own property, off toward the flag-decorated building with the silver sausage floating above it and the highway where clots of little cars were moving in both directions. "Got a nice big crowd," Mr. McIntire said in a voice like spitting.

"Colored and white invited," Mr. Underwood said, and lifted his arms widely to the horizon.

Then they went into the house but instead of loading their guns, Leroy heard them rattling out ice cubes into a bucket. In a few minutes, they brought the makings of their drinks and came out onto the porch. He saw Mr. Underwood kick a chair viciously into place and they sat glumly down, facing out toward the small far hills.

He sighed. There would be no hunting today, for they would never touch a gun after having drunk whiskey. There would be nothing for him to do, for his sole duty was to clean the game, and he shrugged and gathered up his hands like a couple of awkward parcels and sat down at his usual place, a broken-down wooden bench in the yard. He liked to clean the game as well as anything he ever did, holding the warm soft bodies in his loose hands, making the feathers or the scales fly, and he took seriously his job of seeing that it was equally divided between them. For as long as he could remember they had kidded him about stealing their game from them, but in fact it was he who kept them from cheating each other. However, none of that joking today, but only the white men sitting on the porch growing crosser and meaner as the afternoon wore on.

Feeling lonely, he looked sadly out before him. The near fields, warm and still, he knew foot by foot; all the sweep of winter grass, the clumps of cedar or mesquite, the grey bare

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lake. Sluggishly his eyes rose to where the hated houses stood line on line across the hills like rows of little white teeth, gnawing off the distance that lay between them and him. "They coming," he thought unhappily, "They sure gonna spoil the hunting."

There was nothing he could do about it. Slowly, helplessly he dropped his eyes from the hills, down down, until they rested upon a small circle of ground at his feet and found there many comfortable and familiar things; scalloped brown leaves and tiny acorns from the scrub oak trees, shining stalks of dry grass, some wing feathers of a mallard and everywhere whorls of soft grey breast feathers from birds, and right in the middle, a good big cluster of dried horse droppings, all smelling warmly, dustily of earth. He knew that if you sat still in the direct sun, even in winter, you could pull its heat straight through your skin until you had a pool of warmth inside you. This he did now and the voices on the porch diminished for him and disappeared. Gradually he leaned forward, head closer to the ground, until he felt the sun also touch the back of his neck. He did not sleep, he merely peacefully existed.

There was no Time for him then; he would have noted the movement of hours only when the sun had set and left him cold. He could not have said how much later it was when he realised the white men were talking about him. There was a drunken rise and whine to their voices which had not been there when he heard them last.

"Now take Leroy," Mr. Underwood was saying. "There's a fine example of the Negro race—alert, intelligent—a real ball o'fire, ain't he?"

"Hard to keep him still—might peppy, full of fight," Mr. McIntire said and laughed a long, coughing laugh.

"The new Negro," Mr. Underwood mused, and then his voice rose sharply. "Why the hell you suppose he thinks we bring him out here? For his beauty, or his sweet smell, or just because he's so nice and black and shiny?"

"Why hell," Mr. McIntire said, "he just thinks we want him to sit with us so we won't be lonely for him. *That*'s what they think now—they think we just want to be with them all

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the time and everywhere we go—on the buses, you know, and in the schools, and come to dinner with us, and marry our young girls so we'll all really be together—"

"*Lee*roy," Mr. Underwood suddenly howled out like a banshee. "What you doing?"

His eyes rose dead blank. "I been sittin' here a spell, Mistah Underwood. Ain't no game to clean. What I goan do?"

"Well, you can get up off your black behind and go in there and start cleaning up this house."

Leroy looked at him in hopeless stupidity. "This house?" he said tonelessly. Then with gathering force, he said, "But Mistah Underwood, I ain't never *done* that before."

"Well, times are changing, Leroy," Mr. Underwood said, "and we got to change with 'em, so *git* going."

He arose stiffly, went around the house and leaned in dignity against the back screen. All his life he had been kept so busy following the white men's rules that he had never had time to think much about them. It did not seem queer that while he slept in the same room with them, and occasionally, on cold nights, under the same blanket with them on hunting trips, he would be an unwelcome next-door neighbor. It had never bothered him to be cursed or called a thief or a liar by the white men but today, for the first time, they had called him a Negro. In all the years he had known them, they had never before mentioned the color of his skin, avoiding it so completely that he had come to realize without knowing it that this was the one thing which none of them must think about.

So he knew now they did not want him to clean the house, nor mind if he sat still in the sun—they were after something else entirely. They wanted him to fight with them; this much he now understood. He saw that they had pushed and would keep pushing him back until he did something—some unknown and unthought of thing. Frightened by the strangeness of the situation and remembering all the years he had been with them, he could not think now how to be against them. But the fact of his long servitude came newly to his mind and he thought of all he had taken from them—all the

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laughing and the cursing and the dirty nigger work they had given him to do—and now this. Lonely and chilled in the waning light, he leaned against the door driving his mind before him past the outer edges of his own experience, determined that he must act, since they wanted him to, but not realizing how little of himself had been left him to act with.

And then the answer came to him; rose complete in his brain from outside himself, formed of ideas which were not his own. He would steal from them; that was what he should do. He had always known that some Negroes did steal from the whites; he had always known that white people expected Negroes to steal. It was the old and accepted way to get back. Now he knew that this was what he too must do and he stood for a moment in a sudden sweat of relief, thankful that he had been able to think of just the right thing.

Then going quickly into the house, he rummaged in the bathroom closet, found the laundry bag, and taking it into the kitchen, put it down in the middle of the floor. He looked wonderingly about the rough kitchen and decided to start with the liquor closet, both because he knew the whiskey was expensive and because it was something he would never have wanted for himself. Foraging among the bottles, he took out one each of Bourbon, Scotch and cognac, respectfully wiped off the dirty shoulders on his pants, and put them into his sack. Now that he had begun to steal, laying his hands for the first time in things which did not belong to him, he passed into a kind of coma of excitement. At the thought of his own courage, his hands trembled wildly, and his thoughts seemed to come to him with dazzling clarity, like balls of colored light which rose up through his brain and burst, giving out ideas, "Take the toaster," "Better get the guns," "No—finish the kitchen first." Now in his excitement, he slammed the liquor closet door and turned to the food cabinet, but the lower shelves contained only good, inexpensive food, cans of soup and pork-and-beans. Dutifully he climbed up onto the counter to reach the delicacies on the higher shelves. He was standing there, brooding among

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the odd-shaped tins and crockery jars, wondering what was worth stealing, when the white men came out to see what the noise was about. He looked down, his big hands full of cans, and saw them.

They were staring up at him in dazed solemnity. "What the *hell* do you think you're doing?" Mr. McIntire asked in genuine amazement.

"Why, I'se stealing," he said politely, as if in answer to a stupid question, but unexpectedly, on the last syllable, his voice quavered off to a higher note. The men looked astonished, as if they had not expected anything like this at all and their surprise was mirrored in him. "That stuff there," he explained, trying to get his bearings.

Mr. Underwood jerked the sack open and they stood for a moment looking down into it at the odd assortment: the three clean bottles, the greasy old toaster, and a few worthless odds and ends of bar equipment, including a bottle cork with a laughing pottery head. After a moment, Mr. Underwood raised a round, blank face and his eyes roamed off, wild and unfocused, around the kitchen and then back up to Leroy. "What you doing up there, Roy?" he asked.

The sweat broke out on Leroy's face. "I'se stealing, Mr. Underwood," he said. "I'se just stealing."

Now Mr. McIntire's little eyes swept up and over Leroy with bright curiosity and he looked down at the sack and nodded reasonably. "That's right," he said, "he's stealing."

But Mr. Underwood broke out in a wounded, enraged roar. "But Leroy, you never *done* that before." He raised his red hands, grabbed fiercely at the air, and lunging toward Leroy, stumbled and half fell across the sack.

As he struggled to his feet, Mr. McIntire caught hold of his arm and pulled him toward the door. "Come on," he said, "no use to get yourself excited over a nigger stealing. We'll go out on the porch and talk it over."

When they had left the room, Leroy crumpled down from his place somewhere near the ceiling and crouched on the counter, the cans dangling in his hands. He had had no thought beyond this. The shooting lights which had guided him died

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out in his head; whatever had seized him left as suddenly as it had come, leaving behind it nothing, hardly even any memory of itself. He knew that he was in deep trouble from which formless horrors would flow.

His mind lay still in a hollow of fright, while all around it, he heard the men's voices, coming wordlessly from the porch, Mr. Underwood's howling out in brutal fury, Mr. McIntire's breaking anxiously across it, as if trying to calm him down. In his interior misery, it seemed to Leroy that Mr. Underwood would now be sure to have a heart attack, that there was nothing to stop that, too, from following.

Squatting on the counter, after a time his knee joints began to ache but still he did not move. He would not have moved if they had, as he expected, gone to the phone to call the police, or even if the police had burst into the kitchen, keeping himself removed to the last moment from what was going to happen, but suddenly he heard a sound which was so unexpected that it fixed his attention. At first, as though he had never heard it before, he wasn't sure just what it was. Then he realized that someone was laughing. He let himself down from his counter and crept closer to them out into the living room which adjoined the porch.

It was Mr. McIntire who was laughing, with the sound rising in a long, high-pitched yowl.

"What the hell's the matter with you?" Mr. Underwood asked him. "You lost *your* mind, too?" He had begun his question in scorn and amazement but before he had finished there was the slightest rippling and bubbling through the hard surface of his own voice, as if from something rising from below.

"Oh I can't help it—it strikes me funny," Mr. McIntire said, still laughing. "I was just thinking that all those years we been *kidding* Leroy about stealing, he probably really was. Because now it seems like he's got so used to it he doesn't even bother hiding it any more—just stands in the middle of the kitchen and fills up his sack—"

Harshly, reluctantly, Mr. Underwood laughed too. "All these years—you really think so?" He spoke in a voice filled

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with wonder and something akin to appreciation. "Well, I'll be goddam, the crazy nigger," he said, and chuckled.

"We could tell the police he's been stealing from us for thirty years and we finally got good and tired of it." Mr. McIntire snickered.

"Well, I ought to teach him a lesson," Mr. Underwood said sullenly. But then suddenly all the mirth which had threatened his control began to flow through in long, hard brays of laughter. "Well, I'll be goddam," he said again. "How do you suppose he expected to get it home? Were we supposed to drive him there and he'd get out with his sack and thank us for the ride—I mean, *how* did he have it figured!? Can you just tell me that?"

"Why, you can't understand them," Mr. McIntire said reasonably.

"I don't know about that," Mr. Underwood said slowly. "You've just got to remember that they're like children—these people are just like children." Filaments of tenderness clotted wetly in his voice so that he cleared his throat largely. "It's those damned smart Yankee lawyers cause the trouble!" he said. "Our southern Negroes are just like children. Oh *Lee*-roy," he called out, "come out here."

Leroy scuttled forward out of the living room and stood in the doorway to the porch, blinking crazily out at them. The sunny porch, with the men lounging at rest in the wicker chairs was so usual that it seemed totally strange, like something he had never seen before. He was weak and unnerved with the anticipation of trouble that did not come.

But the men were sprawled out at their ease, looking casually, without interest, out at the wide circle of the world. He leaned cautiously against the door and shuffled his feet to get their attention. "Hi Leroy," Mr. Underwood said without looking around.

"Are you gonna call the police now?" he asked. His voice came out louder than usual; in fact, in his surprise that he had spoken at all, it seemed to him almost as though his voice ran crying out before him down the little hills.

"Oh now, Leroy," Mr. Underwood said, "of course we're

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not gonna call the police. I tell you what," he added, "we're gonna give you those things you put in your sack—you just go right ahead and take 'em."

"Oh no," Leroy cried out, appalled, "I don't want them things—what I goan do with 'em?" But he felt tired. He sagged against the door and ceased to speak or listen. Now the sun was very low, the long rays running across the porch and striking back into the house, but the men sat looking straight into it, their faces shallow and expressionless, the empty slopes of their own property before them. He stood behind them, no longer thinking of them or of anything else. Then with a start he became aware that their ears stood from their heads pinkly shining in the late light, rosy-red, purple-veined, a strange and unnatural color.

But Mr. Underwood turned his round eyes sweetly upon him and said coaxingly, like a child at bedtime, "Come on, Leroy, come on out and sit down with us and tell us about this great big robbery you pulled off..."

For a moment, his eyes flitted about as if he were looking for another place to go, but his feet moved him out toward them. He sat down at the extreme edge of a chair and his eyes went wearily backward into his head, seeking invention, and then slowly his hands rose up before him, the grey fingers spread and rigid, as though they held the form of the story he had devised. From deep within him, creaky and flawed, there rose his old crazy cackle. "Well now, gentmun, I tell you," he began...

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ECLOGUE I

for Richard Howard

BERTHA

These cliffs, how glorious, Helen! We have driven
Along this route together often enough
Not to have missed this spot before, or given
It more than an unremembered glance. That bluff
Across from us is so spectacular!
And Oh, the pines, so wonderful and rough
Ringing the necks of the rocky hills like fur!
Green fur. Oh Helen, let's remain a while
Beside this tree and watch the sunset blur
The clouds, the sky, the valley's sides a mile
Apart; the twilight will be heavenly here.

HELEN

Must we, Bertha? This dusty road is vile
Even in the best sunlight, and low gear
Makes the descending crawl a perfect bore.
I'd rather do it while the light's still clear,
Before the mayflies crowd and shadows pour
Obscure and misdirecting ruts along
The road and make us slow down even more.

BERTHA

But Helen dear, you've always felt it wrong
To rush one's way through anything at all.
You've said how, in accompanying a song
It's only inept, nervous girls that fall
To speeding up—it seems *de trop* to mention
That all experiences seem to call
From us their proper tempi of attention—
Let's dwell a little on this languid scene.

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HELEN

This taste for landscapes of your own invention
Grows tiring. These crags and rills are mean
Compared with those we saw this afternoon.
And down below, the path seems scarcely clean,
Littered with picnickings—just see that dune
Of oranges and beer cans over there!
The men will be expecting us, and soon
The treacherous twilight will be my despair
(Not yours, my dear, you've never learned to drive).

BERTHA

Now don't be catty. May be from up here
We might be able to—

HELEN

It's after five!

BERTHA

—Make out the cave that's hidden from our view
By that big rock. See? There! To be alive
At all on such a day as this is too,
Too—I don't know. Whatever I could say
Would spoil it somehow. But to know that you
Must wait all summer, sometimes, for a day
When everything is right—the rocks, the air,
The pines, the light—that's to know that you may
Never see it again like this. Look there!
The path below leads almost to the cave.

HELEN

What, Bertha? Did you say the past leads where?

BERTHA

The *path!* I didn't say "the past."

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HELEN

You gave
The impression that you did.

BERTHA

Well, if I did
Perhaps it's all those memories I have
Of having been there once with Al: we hid
Inside that cave and picnicked in the grove
That grows about its mouth—

HELEN

And there amid
Parts of an eaten capon, and above
The paper cups of High-Life beer gone flat
Some recognition sealed your stares, and love
Like an intruding, serious child just sat
And held you both fixed in his gaze. You left
Off playing footy then, and after that—

BERTHA

Wasn't the way it was at all. You're deft,
Helen, and clever, but you interfere
Where you should not. It's like a kind of theft
To ruin the kind of privacy that her
Own memories afford a person. Al
And I were married then more than a year,
It just so happens.

HELEN

Ceremonial
Merely, or actual, your courting kept
Out of the parching sun of the banal
And cool in the safe shadows, as you stepped
Gingerly in the shelter of illusion.
Oh well, the staging wasn't too inept.
But what about the end of your excursion?
You couldn't scurry off to separate homes,
Grateful sighs hidden in the last confusion.

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BERTHA

Ah, but you see, the country always comes
Quick to Love's rescue, and a sudden chill
Shot through the air, as when the meaning foams
Up in a novel, and you know she *will*
Finally, although you've had such cause to wonder:
The storm came. That cave kept us dry until—

HELEN

Oh, yes: (I've read my schoolbooks, Bertha) thunder
Resounded through the cave, drowning the thwack
And scuffling of your love, and rumbled under
All the ensuing silences. As black
As any city and apartment night
The cave walls were more public; every crack
Of reassuring thunder made it right
For you to recoil guiltily inside
That evil fissure, shrinking from the sight
Of uncondemning eyes, lest they deride
(The chipmunk and the bunny?) your delighted
Feeling of being bad. What made you hide
Inside that cave was something that excited
All your desire, but left it weak and smashed:
For when at last the summer weather righted
And shook off the thunder, pelting raindrops splashed
Pattering in the recollection only;
The cave's permissive shelter fell abashed
Behind the blush of sunlight leaking wanly
Along its rocky mouth; and, I suppose,
You felt depraved and damp and rather lonely?

BERTHA

Dear Helen, don't mock the Sense of Sin. Who knows?
I mean, some guilt of which we're never rid
Shows up in everything each of us does.

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HELEN

Then were the stalagmites ashamed? And did
Their dangling cousins each secrete a tear,
Lascivious and crocodile, that slid
Its pointed length the closer toward the floor?
Did the whole cave publish what it had heard
Of what you called your sin? Coo, Bertha dear,
Your *sin*! You masked your marriage with that word.

BERTHA

The countryside looked so illicit, though,
So very *louche;* and though it seems absurd,
I'd prayed that afternoon for storms to blow
Us, cross, near desperate and getting wet,
Into the cave; and if you think you know
About how we made love there, you forget
That we're all different. And you're wrong; but, please,
Let's talk of something else now. I'm upset.

HELEN

Because I hinted that adulteries,
Or something very like them, can occur
Even within the bounds of marriages?
Or else because you felt I jumped too far
From fact? You know your nervous tics involve
Sucking your wedding ring as if it were
A hard candy that mouthing might dissolve:
I know you make that public emblem one
Behind which your private pleasure can revolve,
Unlicensed by assent, flaring with fun
And games. But there's nothing upsetting in it—

BERTHA

Go on, dear. All I meant was that the sun
Was making me feel queasy for a minute.

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HELEN

I've nothing more to say. It must have been
Quite awful, after all. If you *must* spin it
Out all day, though, let us at least get in
The car and start for home.

BERTHA

Well, dear, you must
Have known I really wanted less to win
You over to my way of thought, than just
To tell you how you went wrong here, for it
Just so happens that Al recalled my lust
For firelight, and got some sticks, and lit
A blaze. And it was lovely till he came,

Rummaging through the lunch, across a kit
(And here I'd only got myself to blame)
Of silly things to do and read I'd packed
Up once for a dull houseparty—the same
One years, Oh, years ago, that you attacked
Me so unfairly at the time for saying
You'd only gone to to be smart—

HELEN

(The fact
Remains that we'd all only gone for playing
"Murder" in that great house before they sold it)

BERTHA

Listen, Helen! He chose a book, and staying
Close to the fire, he read it. Oh, I've told it
All rather badly, dear, but there we stayed
Until the storm blew over, and we folded
The blanket, and—

HELEN

I really am afraid
That I can't tear my hair out over that,
Bertha.

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BERTHA

But don't you see, the book he read
Consumed him *so!* No sooner had he sat
Down with that story of illicit love,
Than all seemed lost for us—of course, it's not
True for a minute that anything could move
Between us—but I looked over his shoulder
For just a second, while from far above
Our heads the thunder shook; and, growing bolder,
I held half of the book, and I must say,
That something overcame me. It was colder,
Darker, somehow, as we perused that gray,
Depressing story. But time passed rapidly
While still we read. We loved no more that day.

HELEN

Oh. Well. I hope, at least, you've learned to see
Such scenes with different eyes. Why, just before,
All you could do was gush about it.

BERTHA

We
Must really go, I know. But I adore
Sunsets like this so, for they always seem
Arranged just to be looked at. See, the floor
Of the valley's turning purple now. One beam
Of late, pink sunlight's shining on the stream.
Oh Helen, how it all looks like a—

(A cough of distant thunder)

—JOHN HOLLANDER

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THE BOARDER

The time is after dinner. Cigarettes
Glow on the lawn;
Glasses begin to tinkle; TV sets
Have been turned on.

The moon is brimming like a glass of beer
Above the town,
And love keeps her appointments "Harry's here!"
"I'll be right down."

But the pale stranger in the furnished room
Lies on his back
Looking at paper roses, how they bloom,
And ceilings crack.

—LOUIS SIMPSON

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NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

FICTION

Alexander Trocchi (From *Cain's Book*) is an Englishman who now lives with his wife and child in Hoboken, New Jersey, where he moved from Paris and the editorship of *Merlin*. Our extracts are from a long work to be published by Grove Press.

Terry Southern (*Grand Guy Grand*) has published stories in THE PARIS REVIEW since the first issue; his interview with Henry Green appears in No. 19. *Flash and Filigree*, his first novel, came out last year, and his second, from which these extracts are taken, will appear this year in the U.S., having already been published in England by André Deutsch. *Grand Guy Grand* is the winning story in the Paris Review Contest for the encouragement of humorous fiction, established by Gertrude Vanderbilt.

Georgia McKinley (*The Crime*) since her graduation from the University of Texas has lived in Troy, New York, where her husband is a physics professor at the Rennsselaer Institute. *The Crime* is her first published story.

INTERVIEW

Donald Hall (*Interview with T. S. Eliot*) is Poetry Editor of THE PARIS REVIEW. His verse has been published in many periodicals in England and the U.S.A. A former winner of the Newdigate Prize at Oxford and the Lamont Award, he has recently published a volume of poems, *The Dark Houses*, with The Viking Press. He teaches at the University of Michigan.

PORTFOLIO

Patsy Southgate (text for *The Eastern Long Island Painters*) is a young writer whose short stories have appeared in the *Evergreen Review*. She is married to the painter, Michael Goldberg, and in the summer they live on Eastern Long Island. The drawings, and one oil painting, reproduced in the portfolio were done especially for THE PARIS REVIEW.

POETRY

Peter Everwine (*To My Father's Ghost*) has studied with Yvor Winters at Stanford and with Paul Engle at Iowa.

Catherine Davis (*Two Poems*) formerly held a fellowship in creative writing at Stanford. She lives in Washington, D.C.

Vern Rutsala (*Thorpe*, *Nurmi*, *Ruth*) served in the army after graduating from Reed College. He is now studying at Iowa.

Ted Hughes (*Crow Hill*) is an English poet whose first book of poems, *Hawk in the Rain*, was published in England by Faber and in America by Harper's.

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Robert Bly (*Two Poems*) is a regular contributor to THE PARIS REVIEW. The editor of *The Fifties*, a "magazine of poetry and public opinion," Mr. Bly lives in Madison, Minnesota and Greenwich Village.

David Ray (*All the Spring Babies*) has published verse in the *Nation*, *The New Republic*, and *The Chicago Review*, for which he recently edited an anthology.

Geoffrey Hill (*Four Poems*) will publish his first book of poems this year with André Deutsch. A contributor to THE PARIS REVIEW from our second issue on, he has also written for *Poetry*, *Hudson Review* and many British periodicals. He will teach at the University of Michigan 1959–1960.

Peter Levi, S.J. (*L'Aurore Grelottante*) is a Jesuit who lives at Stonyhurst College, in England. His first book of verse comes out this Autumn under André Deutsch in England and MacMillan in the U.S.

Stephen Berg (*The Dead's Locale*) was a senior at the University of Pennsylvania when his first poem appeared in THE PARIS REVIEW, 12. He has more recently been studying at Iowa.

Robert Davis (*Daily*) served as a soldier in Korea and Japan. He is now an undergraduate at the University of Michigan.

Mark Roskill (*Chateau de Villandry*) is a young English poet who recently spent a year at Harvard.

Robert Greenwood (*California Landscape*), a former editor of *Talisman*, now teaches at San Jose College in California. His poem, *Explication*, appeared in THE PARIS REVIEW, 13.

Daryl Hine (*The Charms of Circe*) is the youngest poet in the *Penguin Book of Canadian Verse*. He has recently published a volume of poems, *The Carnal and the Crane*.

W. G. van Keuren ("*Morning Beach*," *Acapulco*) published verse in the *Kenyon Review*, *The Hudson Review*, and *The New Yorker*. He died in January, 1959.

John Hollander (*Eclogue* I) is a young poet whose *Crackling of Thorns* was selected by W. H. Auden for the Yale Series of Younger Poets in 1958. He teaches at Yale.

Louis Simpson (*The Boarder*) published a poem of the same title in the last issue of THE PARIS REVIEW. Owing, however, to the number and gravity of the typographical errors which this poem contained, it might be called ours, not Mr. Simpson's. We are now publishing Mr. Simpson's poem, with our apologies.

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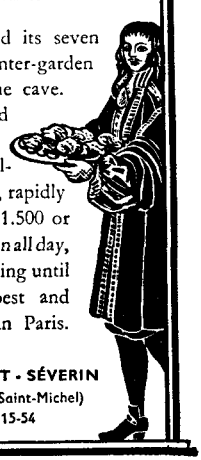

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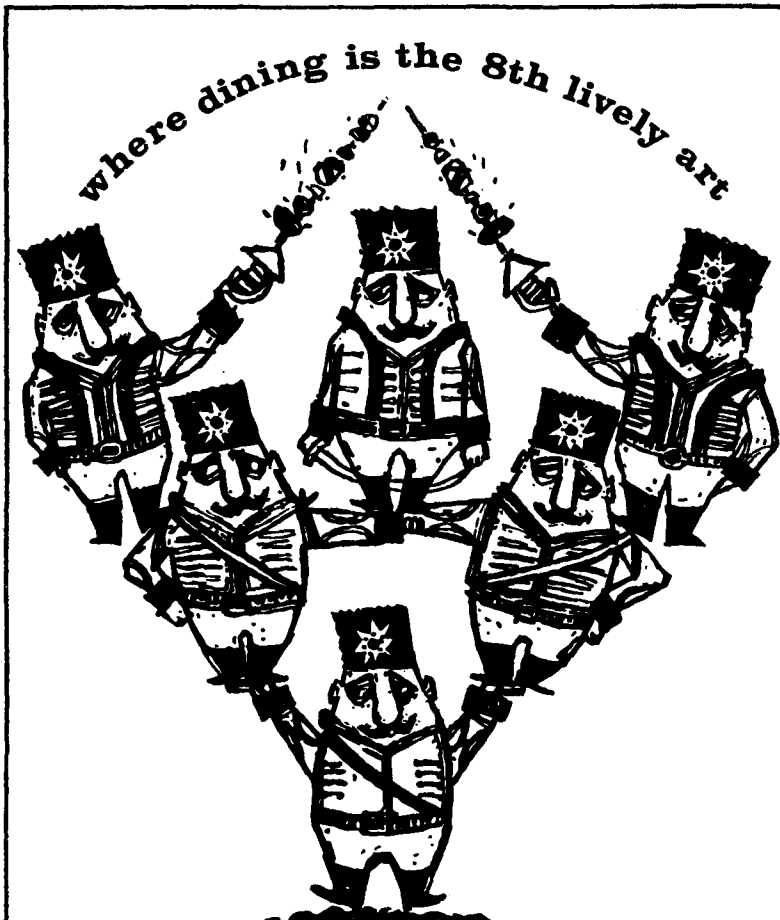

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